BUSINESS / B1

San Miguel sells Coca-Cola stake, to benefit from $590-M deal

WORLD/ A22

Anna Nicole Smith burial urgent as her body decomposing faster than expected

LIFESTYLE/ C1

Hyatt's pioneering fashionistas hold biggest homecoming at Chito Madrigal's house

NEWS / A8

Complete list of successful medical board examinees

DOLE to oversee retake of leaked nursing tests

By Jerome Aning and Christian V. Esguerra

A RETAKE OF TWO PORTIONS OF THE TAINTED 2006 nursing licensure examination may be administered by the Department of Labor and Employment in June or December, Labor Secretary Arturo Brion said yesterday.

Brion said he had prepared a draft executive

DOLE/ A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, February 23, 2007 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 77 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Jinggoy tapped to replace JV as GO campaign manager

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Norman Bordadora

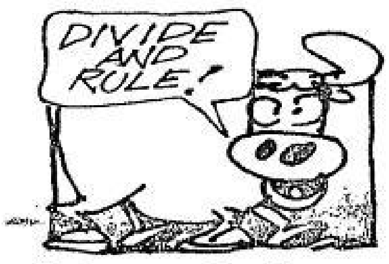
THE GENUINE OPPOSITION IS POISED TO TAP Sen. Jinggoy Estrada to beef up its management team before the campaign period enters its crucial stretch.

A source in GO said the young Estrada, son of deposed President Joseph Estrada, would re-

JINGGOY/ A10

Military counterattacks

ALSTON: "Muchacho, a minor figure in the UN, he's not the UN," Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez rants. JOAN BONDOC


DIVIDE AND RULE!

Akbayan feels Esperon praise a left-handed compliment

BEING DESCRIBED AS "GOOD" isn't exactly the kind of compliment this party-list organization would like to hear from the country's top soldier.

If anything, Akbayan is furious at the sweet words from Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, saying the general was trying to pit the group against other leftist organizations.

"If they see Akbayan as a good [leftist] party, then why do they burn effigies of me at the end of their so-called peace rallies in their anticommunist campaigns in the rural areas?" said Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel in a statement.

Esperon made the comments about Akbayan at a press briefing on the preliminary findings of the United Nations Special Rapporteur Philip Alston on extrajudicial killings in the country.

Akbayan is known to have ide-

AKBAYAN/ A10

Malacañang releases 20-year-old Joma video

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

MALACAÑANG HAS RELEASED a 20-year-old video showing Jose Ma. Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, acknowledging that some party-list groups are legal fronts for the underground movement.

A staffer of a Malacañang official furnished the INQUIRER a copy of the video in compact disc on Wednesday.

Yesterday, the military released the same video. Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said the video was for the "information of the public."

The release of the video came after United Nations Special Rapporteur Philip Alston assailed the government for impeding the work of the party-list groups.

Alston also blamed the military for the killings of leftist activists and journalists in the country.

In the video, Sison said in Brussels, Belgium, two decades ago that the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), Gabriela, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), League of Filipino Students, Alliance of Concerned Teachers and other groups like Kadena were connected with the CPP-National Democratic Front.

Bayan Muna, Anakpawis (for KMP and KMU) and Gabriela currently hold six seats in the House of Representatives

Sison, accompanied by his

MALACAÑANG/ A10

EDSA I AT 21: At the rites at Libingan ng mga Bayani to mark the 21st anniversary of Edsa I, President Arroyo exchanges salutes with AFP Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon. From left, PNP Director General Oscar Calderon, Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, Navy chief Vice Admiral Rogelio Calunsag, Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Horacio Tolentino. AFP

Esperon: It's Alston who is in denial

By Christine O. Avendaño

ARMED FORCES CHIEF of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon yesterday got back at United Nations Special Rapporteur Philip Alston, saying it was the latter and not the military who was in denial about the extrajudicial killings in the country.

Speaking at a news conference in Camp Aguinaldo, Esperon expressed offense at Alston's statement that the Philippine government, particularly the Armed Forces of the Philippines, was not doing enough to address the unabated killings of journalists and leftist activists.

He assailed the UN official for not appreciating the military's position that most of the deaths were a result of internal fighting in the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army, and for calling for a reevaluation of the government's counterinsurgency program.

He said he believed that Alston's statements on Wednesday would not sit well with many AFP members, including the soldiers at the frontlines in the fight against the 39-year-old communist insurgency.

MILITARY/ A9

Melo report tags Palparan 'prime suspect' in killings

By Michael Lim Ubac

FINALLY, MALACAÑANG RE-leased to the media yesterday the report of the Melo Commission that named retired Army Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan the "prime suspect behind the extrajudicial killings" in the country.

The commission said the "whip must be cracked to bring the rogue military elements back in line."

Although the military and police were "laudable and necessary institutions... The military should not be allowed to descend to the level of insurgents and rebels themselves with their lawless, treacherous methodologies."

The report called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to reiterate her condemnation of the killings "in the strongest possible manner" and to announce her resolve to stop them.

Malacañang released the report a day after UN investigator Philip Alston slammed the military for being in "a state of denial" about the "significant number of killings" of left-wing activists by soldiers. *(For full text of Melo Report, go to www.inquirer.net)*

The report, however, virtually cleared the President and the military hierarchy of complicity in the killings of leftist activists and

MELO/ A9

RANDY HORMILLOSA

IT'S THE SCENERY: The Team Unity Senate bets mix business with pleasure on Wednesday as they work hard on shooting their political campaign advertisment at the refreshing resort Villa Escudero in Tiaong, Quezon. From left, Tessie Aquino-Oreta, Mike Defensor, Miguel Zubiri, Chavit Singson, Cesar Montano (behind Singson), Vic Magsaysay, Prospero Pichay, Joker Arroyo, Ed Angara, Ralph Recto and Tito Sotto.

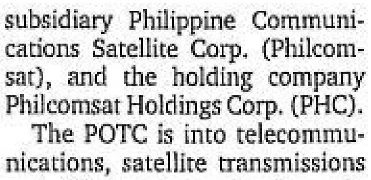
INSIDE PCGG 21 YEARS LATER

Philcomsat inquiry bares agency's 'guts'

By Fernando del Mundo

(Second of a series)

SPECIAL REPORT



SEN. RICHARD GORDON FEARS that the Presidential Commission on Good Government has become a part of the system of spoils for incoming administrations.

"Every time there's a new president, the spoils go to the lackeys, or the favorites," says Gordon, chair of the Senate committee on government corporations that held lengthy nationally televised hearings last year on PCGG's sequestration activities.

This centered on the case of Philippine Overseas Telecoms Corp. (POTC), its wholly owned subsidiary Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. (Philcomsat), and the holding company Philcomsat Holdings Corp. (PHC).

The POTC is into telecommunications, satellite transmissions and information technology. It was one of the country's top corporations before its assets were dissipated. This was the subject

PHILCOMSAT/ A15

SC rules vs Marcos aide, Sandigan, blames PCGG

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS REversed a Sandiganbayan ruling dismissing the government's ill-gotten wealth case against Juan Tuvera, saying the aide of the late President Ferdinand Marcos had used his influence to enable his son, Victor, and his company to get a timber license.

The high tribunal was also outraged at the circumstances behind the civil case, but said it could only order the Tuveras and Twin Peaks Development Corp. to pay P2 million in damages, plus litigation costs, even though it wanted them to pay more.

SC RULES/ A15

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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. Eastern Mindanao will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/02/22/07 SOURCE PAGASA

Ermita is for Vilma in Batangas

By Julie M. Aurelio and Marlon Alexander Luistro, *Inquirer Southern Luzon*

ONE OF PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's men has made known his choice in the Batangas gubernatorial derby—he is a Vilmanian.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, a former Batangas congressman, told reporters yesterday he would support Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos' bid to be governor of Batangas.

The Batangas race has turned into a three-cornered fight among the actress-turned-politician, her brother-in-law, incumbent Vice Gov. Ricky Recto, and incumbent Gov. Armand Sanchez who is running for reelection.

Santos is the wife of Ricky's older brother, Sen. Ralph Recto, and the senator and the mayor are members of the administration coalition Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD). Ralph himself is running for reelection.

"I am the chairman of Lakas in southern Luzon, which covers Batangas. So it just follows [that I will support her]," Ermita told reporters after wreath-laying rites commemorating the 21st anniversary of Edsa I at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio.

Santos is on her third and last term as mayor of Lipa. Ricky has never made a secret of his ambition to be governor. He and Sanchez are embroiled in a feud over graft issues and the bombing of Sanchez's vehicle in which the governor nearly died. Ricky has denied any involvement in that.

Ermita, meanwhile, denied allegations the administration camp was only using Santos for her popularity against her brother-in-law, who is a member of the Genuine Opposition.

ERMITA

SANTOS

"He (Ricky) may have his own motivation for saying that, especially since he is with the opposition. Of course, I deny that anybody is being used by anybody," Ermita said.

'Political dynamics'

He said he saw nothing wrong with Santos running against her brother-in-law because it was all part of "political dynamics."

"Mayor Vilma is the mayor of Lipa and is finishing her term, therefore, nothing will prevent her from aspiring for other positions," Ermita said.

In the midst of the unfolding family political drama, Batangas provincial administrator Ronaldo Geron said Sanchez was ready to face either of the Rectos.

"We cannot be choosy as far as both people are concerned. Everybody has the right to run," said Geron, a Sanchez campaign organizer in the 2004 elections.

Earlier, Ricky had criticized Ralph for announcing that his wife had decided to run for governor, when their family had yet to discuss the matter.

Advantage

He also accused Palace officials, particularly Ermita and presidential adviser on political affairs Gabriel Claudio, of exploiting the issue between him and Vilma.

But, being the incumbent, Geron said Sanchez had an advantage over the two.

He said Sanchez would present to the electorate his accomplishments as governor the past three years while newcomers like the Rectos still had to prepare their platforms.

Geron said 18 of the 34 Batangas mayors, all with the Liberal Party-Atienza wing, had remained supportive of Sanchez.

"We support him because we have seen sound management and development in the province in his tenure, namely, in education and the delivery of health services," said Sta. Teresita Mayor Adorlito Ginete, president of the League of Mayors of the Philippines, Batangas chapter,' in a separate interview.

Ricky Recto, meanwhile, said actor Christopher de Leon of Lobo, Batangas, will be his running mate.

Geron said Sanchez was "still choosing [his vice governor] from among the list of nominees in the party."

GO going for Arroyo impeachment numbers

THE GENUINE OPPOSITION has identified 51 congressional candidates whose electoral campaign it will support in exchange for the commitment that they will vote to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo in the next Congress.

A list of 51 candidates supplied by the GO includes incumbent representatives who voted against when the House minority last attempted to impeach the President on electoral fraud and other charges.

They include House Deputy Majority Leader Cavite Rep. Jesus Crispin Remulla of the Nacionalista Party, Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr., of PDP-Laban and Pampanga Rep. Anna York Bondoc, another NP member.

"One of the GO's criteria to be included in the list of congressional candidates that we will support is for them to commit that they will vote for the impeachment in the next Congress," said GO campaign manager Joseph Victor Ejercito.

Lawyer Adel Tamano, the GO spokesperson, said the member-parties of the opposition coalition are trying to put together a common slate in 160 congressional districts.

"We are fielding 160 candidates so that even if only half of them win, we will still have 80 members who will vote for impeachment," said Tamano.

The 51 names include 21 incumbent House members, seven former congressmen and 23 other candidates. *Norman Bordadora*

Kris rushed to hospital, docs order bed rest

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

TELEVISION HOST KRIS AQUINO, WHO IS in her seventh month of pregnancy, was rushed to the Makati Medical Center yesterday after she "almost went into labor," according to an ABS-CBN executive who requested anonymity because she was not authorized to speak on the matter.

Aquino's close friend and co-host on the ABS-CBN talk show "The Buzz," Boy Abunda, however, confirmed that Kris was taken to the hospital around "lunch time yesterday."

"When she woke up at 5 p.m. [yesterday], she seemed okay," Abunda said. "The term used by the doctor was false labor brought about by stress. She had had stomach pains."

'Very delicate'

Another close friend of Aquino's told the INQUIRER an induced delivery was prevented and her doctors ordered complete bed rest.

"She will be staying in the hospital for the next three or four days," Abunda said. "The doctor told her her condition is very delicate, that she should rest and avoid all sorts of stress, that she should stop watching TV and reading tabloids."

The emergency was purportedly brought on by Aquino's distress over the latest controversy in her life: The alleged illicit affair between her husband, James Yap, and a beauty clinic facial attendant identified only as Hope.

In an interview with manager-entertainment columnist Lolit Solis for the GMA-7 talk show "Star Talk," Hope reportedly divulged "intimate" details of her purported affair with Yap.

The full interview will air tomorrow, but excerpts were shown last night on GMA-7's prime-time news show, "24 Oras."

In the excerpt, Hope asked televiewers not to judge her. "I am just a woman who fell in love," she said in Filipino.

Sexually graphic text

Details of Hope's confession also saw print in the tabloids, according to another close friend of Aquino's.

"One report claimed that Hope showed as proof of Yap's sexually graphic text messages to her. The scandal could've triggered the emergency," the friend said.

Asked to comment, Abunda said: "I am not discounting the possibility that this [emergency] was caused by the intrigues. She is experiencing real pain now. I just want to tell the people: Kris is the victim here. If she were not pregnant, she will fight [all the intriguemongers]."

Last Sunday on The Buzz," Aquino confirmed she was having marital problems. Yap later owned up to his mistake and promised on air, *"Hindi na ito mauulit* [This will not happen again].

The couple, however, declined to go into details.

"It should be between the two of us," Aquino said on the show. She said she had decided to remain married to Yap, in spite of the "problems."

"I will not allow anyone to destroy my marriage," she said.

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Did GMA cheat? That's not my issue, says Goma

By Norman Bordadora

GOMEZ

ACTOR RICHARD GOMEZ YESTERDAY added his name to the list of erstwhile opposition figures who no longer wanted to address the issue of cheating by President Macapagal-Arroyo in the 2004 presidential election.

Gomez, who is running for the Senate as an independent despite being a member of the pro-administration Nationalist People's Coalition, told reporters the issue was something he'd rather not address right now.

"That's not my issue at this time," Gomez said when asked his thoughts on the President's legitimacy following the exposure of the "Hello Garci" tapes that strongly hinted she may have cheated her opponent then, actor Fernando Poe Jr., of victory.

Gomez was one of Poe's avid supporters. Poe died in December 2005 after suffering a massive stroke.

Pressed for a categorical "yes" or "no" on whether he thought Ms Arroyo had cheated, Gomez replied: "The issue has yet to be resolved. How can I say whether or not she did?"

"I supported Fernando Poe because I thought he would have made a very good president," Gomez added.

He said he met with the opposition's leader, deposed President Joseph Estrada, on Jan. 1 to tell him that he wanted to run for the Senate, but was told that it was already too crowded in the opposition camp.

He then joined the NPC but was not included in the administration lineup. NPC members in the administration's Senate slate include Poe campaign leaders former Senators Vicente "Tito" Sotto III and Tessie Aquino-Oreta.

When Leyte Gov. Jericho Petilla pulled out of the administration's senatorial ticket last week, another actor, Cesar Montano, not Gomez, was picked to replace him.

"They must have seen something good in Cesar," Gomez said. "I welcome him to the senatorial race," he added.

Gomez's statements came in the wake of reports Team Unity might change its composition one more time.

"My door is open to negotiations. That can be discussed," Gomez said.

Party-list groups hits disqualification case

By Nikko Dizon

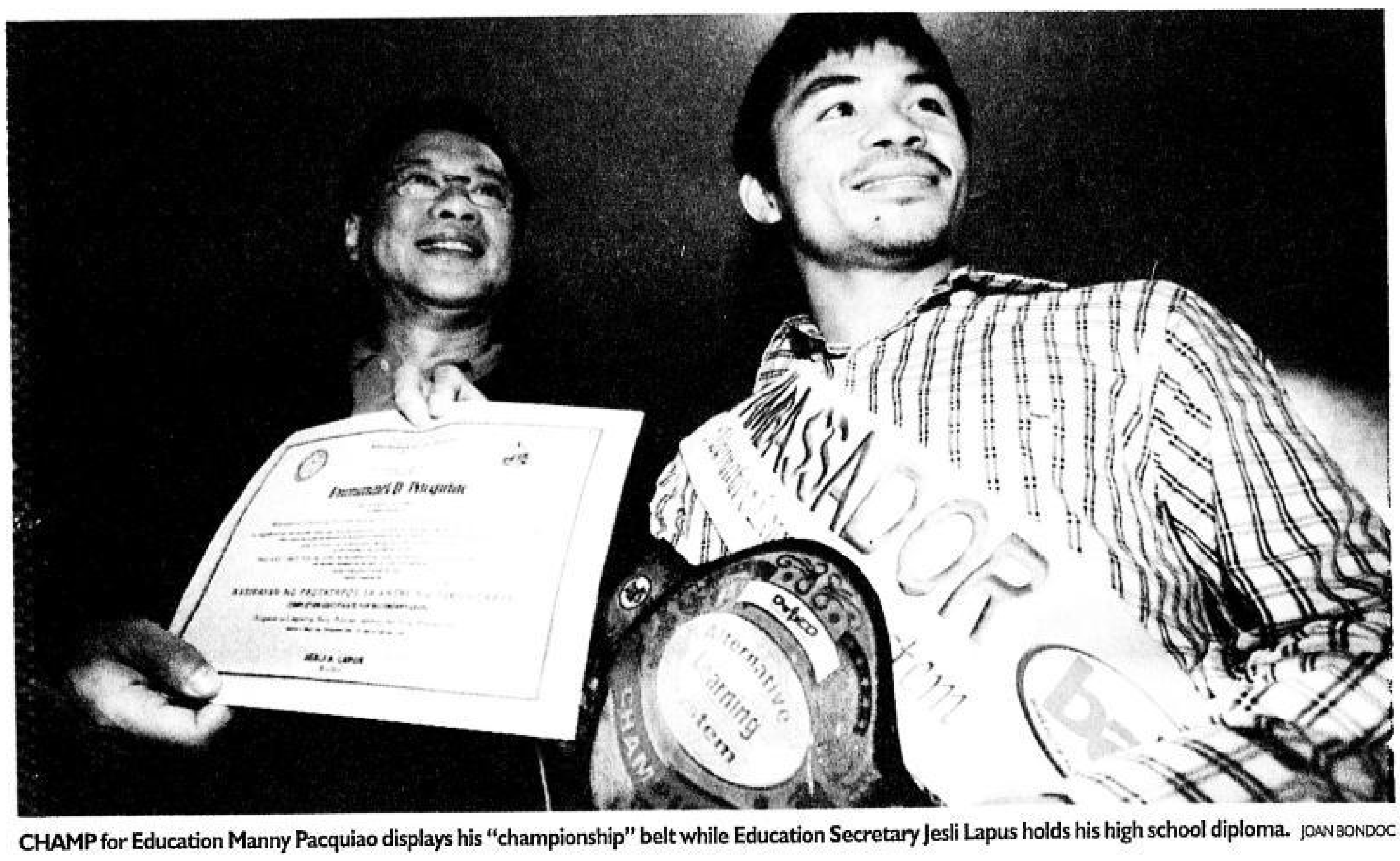
PARTY-LIST GROUPS BAYAN MUNA AND Gabriela yesterday asked the Commission on Elections to dismiss the disqualification petitions filed against them by the widows of two slain rebel returnees in Nueva Ecija.

The complaints filed by the widows—alleged members of the moderate Akbayan party-list group who requested anonymity for security reasons—were merely part of the government's efforts to discredit and harass them, Bayan Muna and Gabriela said in separate letters to Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr.

The widows also sought the disqualification of another party-list group, Anakpawis, from the May 14 midterm elections.

"The complaints for disqualification are obviously part of the vicious but futile attempts of Malacañang and military and police officials to discredit and demolish Bayan Muna," Nathaniel Santiago, Bayan Muna secretary general, said in the letter.

"We appeal to the commission to junk this malicious and baseless complaint for disqualification and other efforts to trifle with laws or the commission itself," Santiago said.



CHAMP for Education Manny Pacquiao displays his "championship" belt while Education Secretary Jesli Lapus holds his high school diploma. JOAN BONDOC

'PEOPLE'S CHAMP FOR EDUCATION'

Pacquiao going to college

By Jerry E. Esplanada

BOXING HERO EMMANUEL "Manny" Pacquiao has scored what the Department of Education (DepEd) calls a "one-two knockout punch."

In a news conference, Education Secretary Jesli Lapus yesterday named Pacquiao special ambassador for the agency's Alternative Learning System and "People's Champ for Education."

Pacquiao "serves as an inspiration to the youth, especially those who were unable to push through with their studies due to difficult and unfortunate situations."

Lapus also cited the professional boxer for passing DepEd's Accreditation and Equivalency or A & E test for high school which Pacquiao and brother Bobby took on Feb. 3 at the Ireneo Santiago National High School in General Santos City.

"That makes him a bona fide high school graduate and eligible for college education," said Lapus shortly after signing Pacquiao's A & E certificate before a huge crowd at the DepEd headquarters in Pasig City.

A visibly elated Manny Pacquiao said, "God is great!" as he also thanked the education department for helping him make his dream of finishing high school a reality.

On his A & E test, Pacquiao recalled: "*Para akong binugbog ng anim na oras. Talo pa ang* 15 rounds *ng* boxing."

"I had a hard time answering questions in mathematics and science....But I concentrated. *Talagang ginalingan ko*," he disclosed.

At the same time, he announced he was planning to take up a college course—"either political science or management."

He promised to "really think about it."

In brief remarks, Pacquiao urged the country's 11 million out-of-school youth and adults to pursue education even outside of the formal education system.

"*Lahat tayo may kakayahan*," he said, affirming Lapus' claim that education is the "number one equalizer versus poverty."

In a statement, the education secretary noted the Pacquiao brothers had "dropped out of high school because of extreme poverty."

"But that didn't stop Pacman from going back to complete his studies. And like many of his victories in the ring, Manny successfully passed the A & E examination," Lapus said.

He did not say, however, if Bobby Pacquiao also passed the same test.

Lapus called Manny Pacquiao an "excellent model for out-of-school children, youth and adults who are determined to learn and are able to gain functional literacy skills outside of formal schooling."

"Here's a man who pursued education for education's sake...His desire to complete his high school education despite his age and stature through alternative forms of education and learning is truly very admirable," he said.

Last year, some 50,000 persons took the A & E test but "only 20 percent of examinees" passed, according to Lapus.

This year, the same number took the test in various parts of the country.

Test results are processed and analyzed by the Center for Educational Measurement or CEM, a non-government organization specializing in testing and evaluation.program.

Cops say case against solon weak

THE AVIATION POlice chief yesterday admitted that airport security might have a weak case against Laguna Rep. Danton Bueser, who was apprehended at international airport a week ago for carrying bullets and a pistol magazine on his way to a US-bound aircraft.

Senior Supt. Atilano Morada, chief of the Philippine National Police Aviation Security Group, told the INQUIRER yesterday that police have been taking it "slow but sure" to build up the case against Bueser as the odds might be against the police in pursuing the charges.

According to initial information from our legal officer, the incident might not fall under the election ban because the provisions clearly state that only firearms and deadly weapons are banned during election period. So that might weaken our case, said Morada.

Aviation police have been counting on charging Bueser with violation of the election ban, in lieu of holding him liable for illegal possession of ammunition. *Tarra Quismundo*

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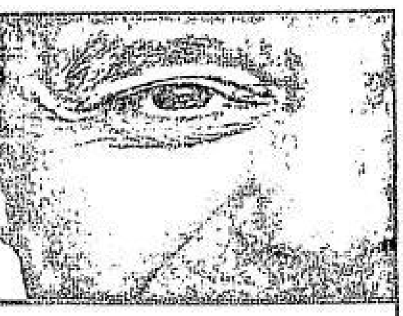

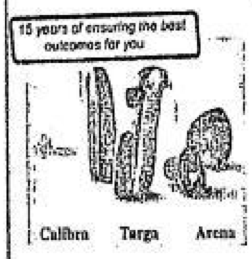

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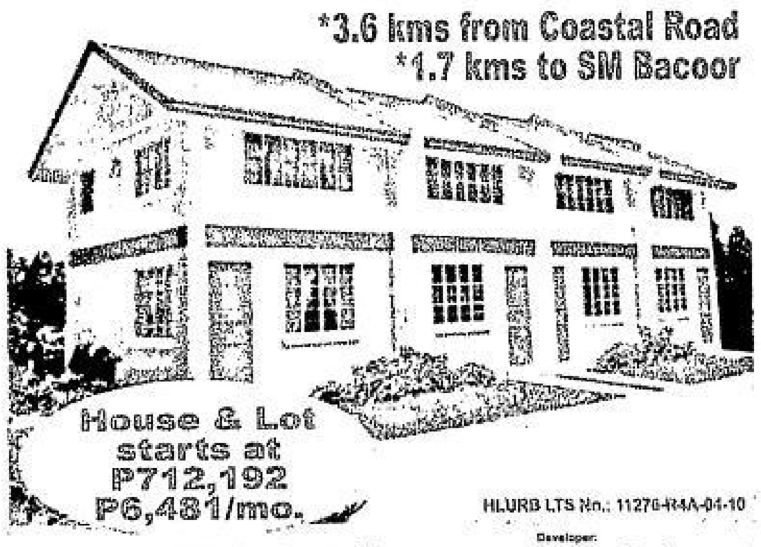

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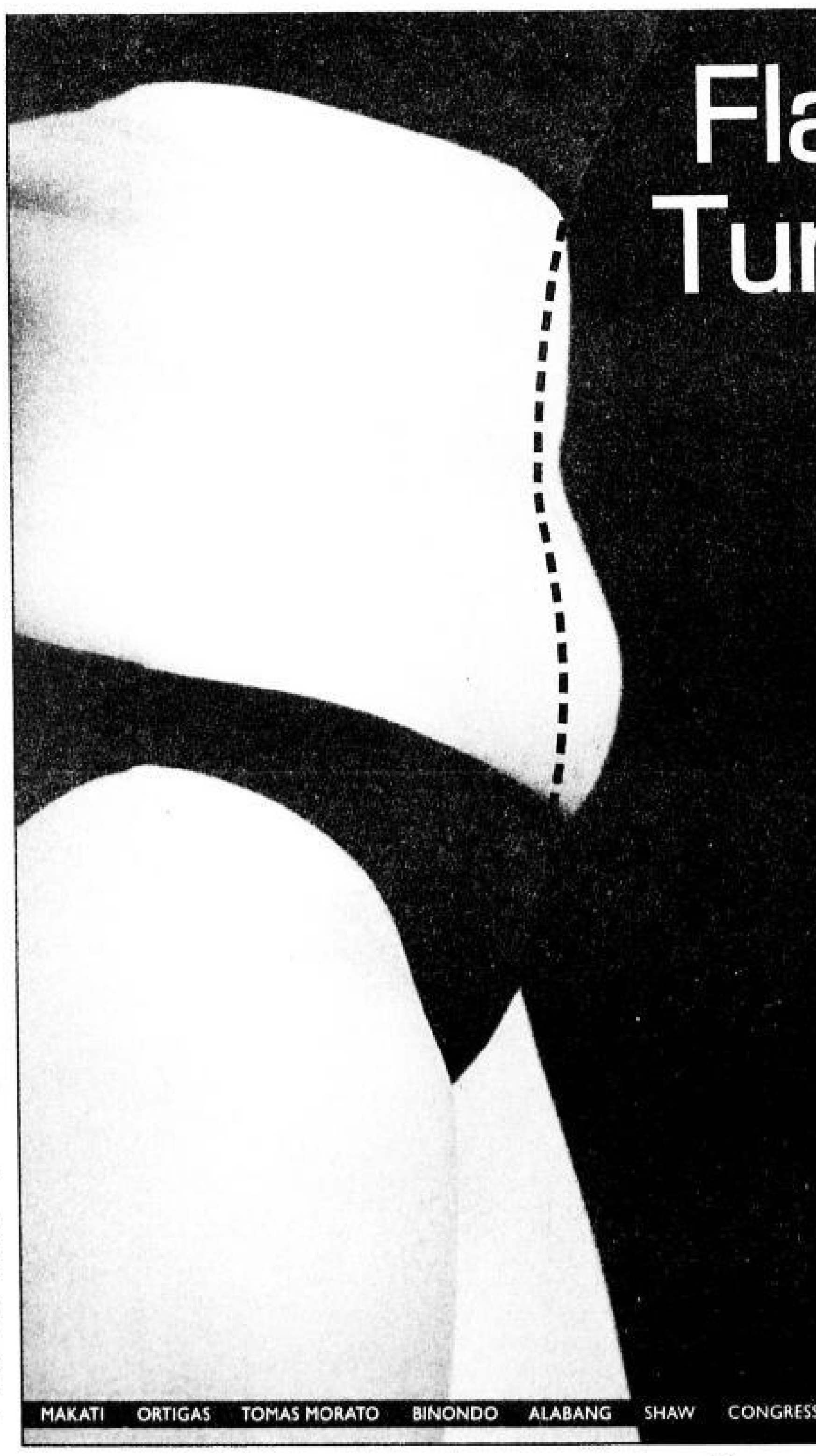

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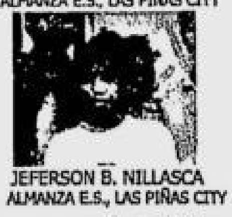
NICCO F. ROSAL
ALMANZA E.S., LAS PIÑAS CITY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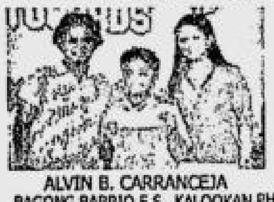
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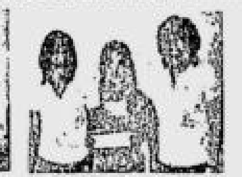
BAGONG BARRIO E.S., KALOOKAN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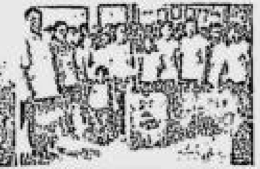
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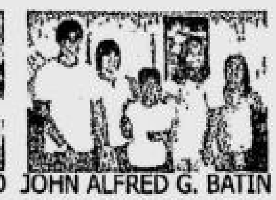
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HOMER D. TIRO
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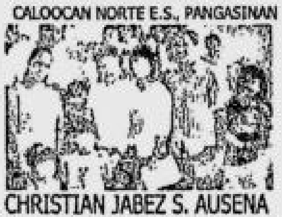
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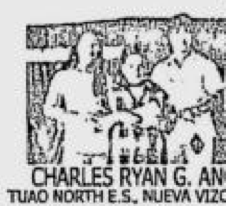
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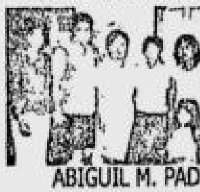
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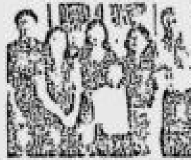
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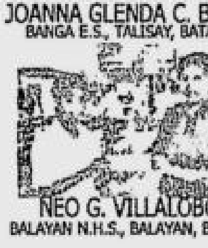
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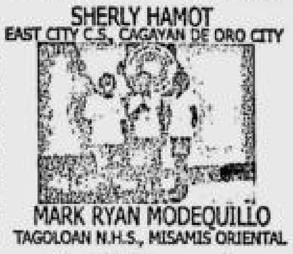
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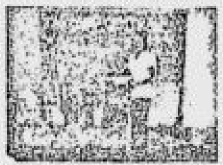
TAGOLOAN N.H.S., MISAMIS ORIENTAL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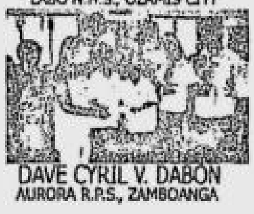
CARMEN N.H.S., CAG.DE ORO CITY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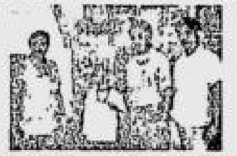
AURORA R.P.S., ZAMBOANGA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DUSTIN JAMES R. CUBITA, MOONWALK E.S.
JHOMAR R. ARIZ, EMS SIGNAL VILL E.S.
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APRIL ROSE A. ZAMORA, SAN ANTONIO E.S.
MONICA MARIE C. AGUSTIN, ALMANZA E.S.
JULIET R. ADVINCULA, ALMANZA E.S.
RICHMOND C. VISAGAR, ALMANZA E.S.

NORTH LUZON

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BERNADEN T. FEBRIO, SAMPUT E.S.
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SHANDERLEE INES, TEPPENG E.S.
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AIZELY DOMINIQUE R. FERMIN, R. S. S. C.
IVAN JOEFFREY LEAL FERNANDEZ, PANIKI E.S.

SOUTH LUZON

JANELLA I. EUSEBIO, DASMARIÑAS N.H.S.
KRISTIN DIR BORN C. HABAC, BALAYAN N.H.S.
JENNIBEL A. BITCO, BALAYAN N.H.S.
JOY GONZALES, DASMARIÑAS N.H.S.
ROSE MARJORIE G. PAMPLONA, LA CONSOLACION
MICO ADRIAN CAPISTRANO,YUKOS E.S.
TRISHANNE MAREE Q. DELA CRUZ,TINGA I. E.S.
MARY GRACE ENCABO,DASMARINAS N.H.S.
EARL MAICY L. WONG,BIÑAN N.H.S.
GINO C. CABARLE,CAMARINES SUR N.H.S.

VISMIN

JENO L. BACALSO, INAWAYAN NIGHT H.S.
GEORRES DOVE MELGO, DIGOS CITY N.H.S.
VICKY B. BAYOTAS, SACRED HEART E.S.
RIZA MARIE CORTES, R. DUTERTE MEM N.H.S.
CLINTON C. MALAZARTE, DIGOS CITY N.H.S.
KEVIN ROSS A. EVIOTA, DIZON E.S.
NOVIE JANE GALAMITON, TAGOLOAN C. S.
JOEY ALVIN R. GAHISAN, PUERTO N.H.S.
HANNAH PAULA SANGUYO, Y.L.A.C.
LUDABELLA SANES, LA SALLE UNIV. OZAMIZ

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MARY CRISTINE B. ARCAY, ALMANZA E.S.
MELANIE P. CABACCAN, APOLONIO SAMSON E.S.
JUNATHAN A. EVARLE, MAYSAN N.H.S.
JOHN RENZ SORITA, ALMANZA E.S.
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KEVIN BAYLON, JUAN SUMULONG HIGH SCHOOL
KEVIN PAULO R. BARTOLO, R. ALMARIO E.S.
PRECY HABOC, TAGUMPAY N.H.S.

NORTH LUZON

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CHRISTINE A. CORTEZ, EAST CENTRAL C.
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NATHANIEL M. SOTTO,JR., DAPDAP H.S.
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JESSAMANE J. DIZON, SAN JUAN H.S.
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DIVINE G. CABLAO, PINAGBAYANAN E.S.

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JOHN KENNETH P. GOMEZ, BALAYAN N.H.S.
RUTH B. LABIANO, DASMARIÑAS N.H.S.
MELMARIE M. CAMUS, BUKAL E.S.
LOUIE ANTHONY B. ORANE, CAM SUR N.H.S.
JASSIM E. ARTIAGA, CAM SUR N.H.S.
JEAN BALILLA, CAMARINES SUR N.H.S.
MA. JUDY ANTHONETTE ECHAVEZ, D. N.H.S.
JOHN MAGNO H. SALAZAR, BALAYAN N.H.S.
JENVIE H. PUJANTE, BALAYAN N.H.S.
CHYLA G. DONASCO, DASMARIÑAS EAST N.H.S.
CHRISTINE JOY JARABE, DASMARIÑAS N.H.S.
PHILIP RAY C. TEGIO, BATANGAS N.H.S.
JOY ANN TUMBAGA, BAUTISTA E.S.
CAROL TOLEDO, BALAYAN E.S.

VISMIN

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SHERRY MAY M. NOVAL, DIGOS CITY N.H.S.
ALMA D. COQUILLA, DIGOS CITY N.H.S.
GILBERT CLYVE TUMULAK, CABANCALAN N.H.S.
THON LOUIE BAUL, MAGALLANES E.S.
MERCA SERVILLON, HOLY ROSARY ACADEMY
ROMARIE FE GALOGO, DIGOS CITY N.H.S.
JOANNA MARIE NACIONAL, TAGOLOAN C.S.
IVY DOROTHY G. LAPING, TAGOLOAN C.S.
NEPTHALIE S. GADOR, TAGOLOAN C.S.
JAN KIM N. RAAGAS, AMLAN N.H.S.
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FRITZ GERALD P. MANAGO, MANDAUE CITY C.S.
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KRISZELLE JOY BALLENA
EBONY U. DALANON
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JOMAR T. TAMINI
JUVYN TRASES
JOBEL C. BELLO
VINCE CHRISTIAN A. DILIG
ORLAND M. BARICUATRO
ANGELICA R. DE DIOS
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LOREN D. AGAPITO
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JEFFREY DE GUZMAN
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PER BFAD NO.1095. SERIES OF 2006

THE ROGEMSON COMPANY, INC.

Oil retrieval from sunken tanker to cost up to $12M

By Abigail L. Ho

OIL RETRIEVAL OPERATIONS ON THE SUNKEN Solar 1 oil tanker will start by March 14, at a cost of between $6 million and $12 million.

Sonsub, an Italian-based deepwater operations company, has been commissioned by the Protection and Indemnity Club (P&I) to retrieve any remaining oil from the tanker which sank off the coast of Guimaras island in August 2006.

The cost will be shouldered entirely by P&I, the marine insurance company of Solar 1's owner, Sunshine Maritime.

The Solar 1 is lying at a depth of 640 meters, out of reach of local divers.

The vessel was carrying around 2,000 tons of fuel oil that it was transporting for Petron Corp. when it sank in a storm, precipitating a spill that affected parts of Guimaras island and Iloilo province.

To retrieve any oil remaining in the sunken vessel, Sonsub will use Allied Shield, an 80-meter dynamic positioning vessel that will use thrusters to keep it in position over Solar 1 at all times.

Two remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) will then be deployed to extract and retrieve the oil from the sunken vessel.

The retrieval will involve drilling two holes in each of Solar 1's tanks: one hole will be injected with water to displace any remaining oil, while the other hole will serve as the passageway for any oil that will be extracted.

A fail-safe valve will ensure that the oil will not escape into the water but will instead go into a shuttle cylinder on top of the valve.

The cylinder will then be brought to around 40 meters near the surface where submersible pumps will siphon the captured oil into ISO tanks on the Allied Shield.

"We will be operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week to hasten the recovery of any trapped oil in Solar 1. We wish to assure you, however, that we have several measures in place to ensure a fail-safe operation. Still, we have contingency plans in place in the unlikely event of any oil release," Sonsub commercial manager Robin Galleti said in a statement.

The contingency plans include oil spill response tugboats to be deployed for the duration of the retrieval operations.

The tugboats are equipped with oil dispersants, oil skimmers for the mechanical recovery of oil and spill booms for containment.

An aircraft with airborne dispersant capability would also be continuously monitoring the area, Galleti said.

Trillanes challenges Joker to a debate

EX-REBEL MILITARY OFFICER TURNED SENatorial candidate Antonio Trillanes IV yesterday challenged to a debate Sen. Joker Arroyo, who has referred to Trillanes as the "poster boy of rebellion."

In a statement issued from his detention, the former Navy junior officer said he would rather raise the level of campaign through a debate to see who has "the best prescription for the country's ills."

Arroyo, who is seeking re-election under the administration Team Unity ticket, has chided the Genuine Opposition for taking in Trillanes in their line-up.

Opposition campaign spokesman Adel Tamano, who was a classmate of Trillanes in a post-graduate public administration course in the University of the Philippines, said Trillanes' decision to run meant that he recognizes democratic processes.

The veteran lawmaker said the opposition has not denounced attempts for the unconstitutional overthrow of President Macapagal-Arroyo's government.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, February 23, 2007
Friday After Ash Wednesday
Polycarp

1st Reading: Is 58:1-9
Gospel: Matthew 9:14-15

The disciples of John came to Jesus with the question, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast on many occasions, but not your disciples?"

Jesus answered them, "How can you expect wedding guests to mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? Time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, then they will fast."

Commentary

We are caught off guard and told to look at and listen to our own wickedness: we quarrel and fight, strike with wicked claw; we treat workers dishonestly; we bind others unjustly; we oppress the poor and refuse to share our bread with them or care for the homeless, the sick; we do not practice the corporal works of mercy; and we turn our backs on those who reach out to us in need. And then we cry out to God and expect God to immediately hear us and answer. But we are in the presence of the light, the bridegroom. If only we would do a fast for justice, from violence and terror, share what we have and forgive, then our wounds would be quickly healed. This is the time of Lent, when the glory of the Lord waits to be our rear guard, and God seeks to draw ever closer to us. So we fast, emptying out what is evil so that God can enter it to dwell more closely with us.

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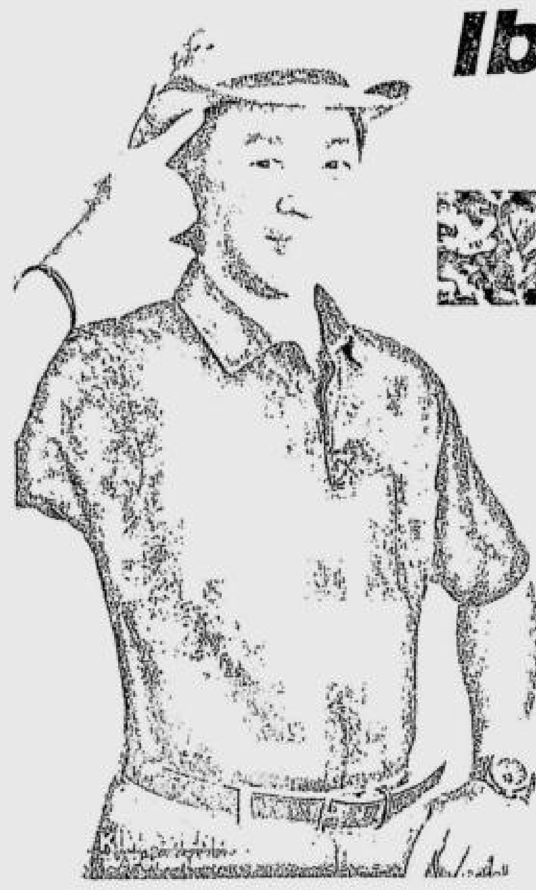

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Devanadera is new SolGen

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE GOVERNMENT corporate counsel, Agnes Devanadera, has been appointed solicitor general to replace Antonio Eduardo Nachura, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez announced yesterday.

"I'll make an announcement. Agnes Devanadera has been appointed solicitor general," Gonzalez told reporters yesterday.

Gonzalez has a copy of Devanadera's appointment signed by the President naming her to the said post. He also has a letter signed by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita informing Devanadera of the appointment.

But he said he will first have to give Devanadera copies of her appointment papers before releasing this to the media.

He also said Devanadera will assume her new post when she has wound up her affairs at the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel.

Asked about earlier reports that Eastern Samar Rep. Marcelino Libanan would be the new solicitor general, Gonzalez said Libanan wanted to finish his term, which would end in June this year.

"For a while the president was thinking of Libanan, but I think Libanan does not want to leave his position as congressman yet," he said.

Devanadera was also a contender for Supreme Court associate justice, but the position was eventually filled in by Nachura.

She used to be the national president of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines from 1995 to 1998.

Devanadera also used to be the lawyer of former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, who has since been found by the Ombudsman to be liable for graft and extortion in connection with the complaint of former Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez, who claimed Perez extorted $2 million from him.

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C1B	Beijing, Shanghai, Guilin 6 - 8 Days	3/29, 4/03
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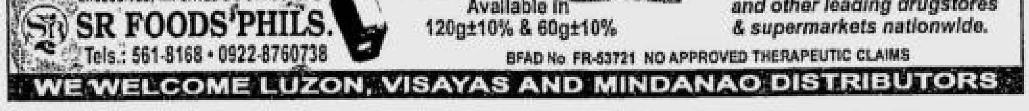
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Frenchman detained for plane bomb joke

By Tarra Quismundo

BRIONNE

THEY NEVER LEARN, DO THEY?

A French passenger on a Bangkok-bound Cebu Pacific Air flight caused a delay of almost four hours Wednesday after he joked that he had a bomb in his carry-on bag.

Michel Christian Joseph Brionne, 66, was charged in the Pasay City Prosecutor's Office with alarming the passengers and crew of Cebu Pacific flight 5J 931 scheduled to fly out of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at 10:45 p.m.

"Making a false bomb threat is a very serious offense. That's why passengers should observe security regulations… so that there will be no problems, no flight delays," said Senior Supt. Efren Labiang, 1st Police Center for Aviation Security (PCAS) chief.

Blaming the language barrier, however, Brionne claimed a flight attendant had misheard him when he said there was a "bunch of flowers," not a "bomb," in his hand-carry luggage.

The authorities went ahead anyway and charged him with violating Presidential Decree No. 1727, which punishes making a false declaration of possessing explosives with a jail term of from two to six years.

Off-loaded

Brionne and his traveling companion, a Filipino woman, were off-loaded from the plane, which was then towed to an area away from the other planes and swept for explosives.

All checked-in and carry-on luggage were likewise inspected and the passengers and crew were made to undergo another security check.

The plane finally took off for Bangkok at 2:20 a.m. Thursday.

Brionne, meanwhile, insisted chief flight attendant Maria Charisma Robale had simply misunderstood him.

During the pre-flight head count, Robale spotted Brionne's black carry-on bag on a vacant seat near his window seat.

In her statement to police, she said she asked him to place the bag in the overhead bin.

"He said 'I want it near me because I have a bomb inside it.' So I asked him, 'What did you say, sir?' He repeated the word 'bomb' three more times and his fiancee told him to stop saying it, but it was too late because he already said it four times," Robale said.

"I [then] informed the pilot-in-command and our ground personnel," she said.

According to Brionne, Robale "saw the bag, it was open and so she asked [about it] and I tell her 'no, it's a bunch of flowers, leave it here because we are on honeymoon.'"

"But she did not hear me… And shooong! She took a sprint, a sprint! Vooom immediately to the captain," said Brionne in heavily-accented English.

Brionne was interviewed by the INQUIRER at the PCAS headquarters, where he and his unidentified companion passed the night.

When asked, however, if there really were flowers in his bag, Brionne said: "No, it was a joke."

Police found no bomb or flowers in the bag, only Brionne's personal belongings.

Another passenger backed Robale. Cesar Balane, who was seated a row away from Brionne, told police in a statement he heard "an old man say 'please don't move my baggage, it has a bomb on it.'"

Balane also said that "even before we boarded the plane, he [Brionne] showed weird behavior… He would make his cell phone beep very loudly and then he would laugh all of sudden, catching the attention of passengers. He was very loud."

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Solons ask GMA to keep Baja in UN

By Cynthia D. Balana

SIXTY CONGRESSMEN have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to retain Ambassador Lauro Baja as the country's permanent representative to the United Nations until he has completed his term as vice president of the Economic and Social Council or until his replacement has been confirmed by the Commission on Appointments.

In a letter to the President, the congressmen said that Baja's positions in the UN were a bid boost to the country's image in the international body.

Among the signatories were Representatives Hermilando Mandanas, Agapito Aquino, Remedios Petilla, Constantino Jaraula, Ace Barbers, Jaime Lopez, Uliran Joaquin, Vincent Garcia, Amelita Villarosa, Christian Seneres, Rene Velarde, Lorna Silverio, Roseller Barinaga, Reylina Nicolas, Etta Rosales, Antonio Roman, Victoria Reyes, Roquito Ablan, Salacnib Baterina and Benjamin Abalos Jr.

Baja was recalled by the Department of Foreign Affairs early this month after the President appointed former Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. to replace him.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo handed over to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon the resumé of Davide, a violation of diplomatic protocol, according to Sen. Jinggoy Estrada.

Estrada informed the UN Secretary General that Davide's appointment has not yet been confirmed by the CA.

In their letter, the congressmen said that Baja led the Philippines in topping the elections for the Ecosoc last year, a first for the country in any major organ in the UN.

They said that Baja was cited by members of the UN and the UN Secretary General for the "impressive Philippine two-year membership of the Security Council.

Baja was also responsible for the Philippines' election to the Human Rights Council, and succeeded in having the UN endorse the country's initiatives on migration and development, interfaith dialogue for peace, debt equity in Millenium Development Goals projects and Asean observer in the UN.

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DSWD tightens control over relief goods

ALL RELIEF GOODS distributed to disaster victims will bear the seal of the Department of Social Welfare and Development from now on.

Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral has instructed all regional directors and heads to stamp each relief item provided by the agency with the DSWD logo and an indelible "not for sale" marking to ensure that they are distributed to the rightful beneficiaries.

The relief goods include tents, beddings, clothing, toiletries, canned items and medicines, but even food packs will be stamped with the seal.

"All items brought into the warehouses and storage areas shall be marked as soon as practicable upon their receipt. Do not wait until you need to ship them out before marking them," Cabral said in her memorandum.

The directive was apparently in response to the many complaints aired by victims of Supertyphoon Reming in Bicol that they never got any relief goods from the national government.

Some villagers also alleged that relief packages were being diverted to other places for distribution during the election campaign.

The DSWD earlier reported that out of the more than P66 million it received in donations, more than P57 million were foreign donations in kind and P3 million were local donations in kind.

Cabra said that the agency was trying to make sure that the worst hit areas would receive a fair share of the goods, whether they came from government or private institutions.

She also explained that the DWSD was giving priority to areas that cannot be reached by non-government organizations, whose activities and rehabilitation programs the department closely monitors, as some already have help "coming out of their ears."

Disaster victims apparently defined "help" as something that should always be provided by the national government, said Cabral, who visited Bicol three weeks ago.

The directive would help the agency to track down where relief packages end up, she said. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

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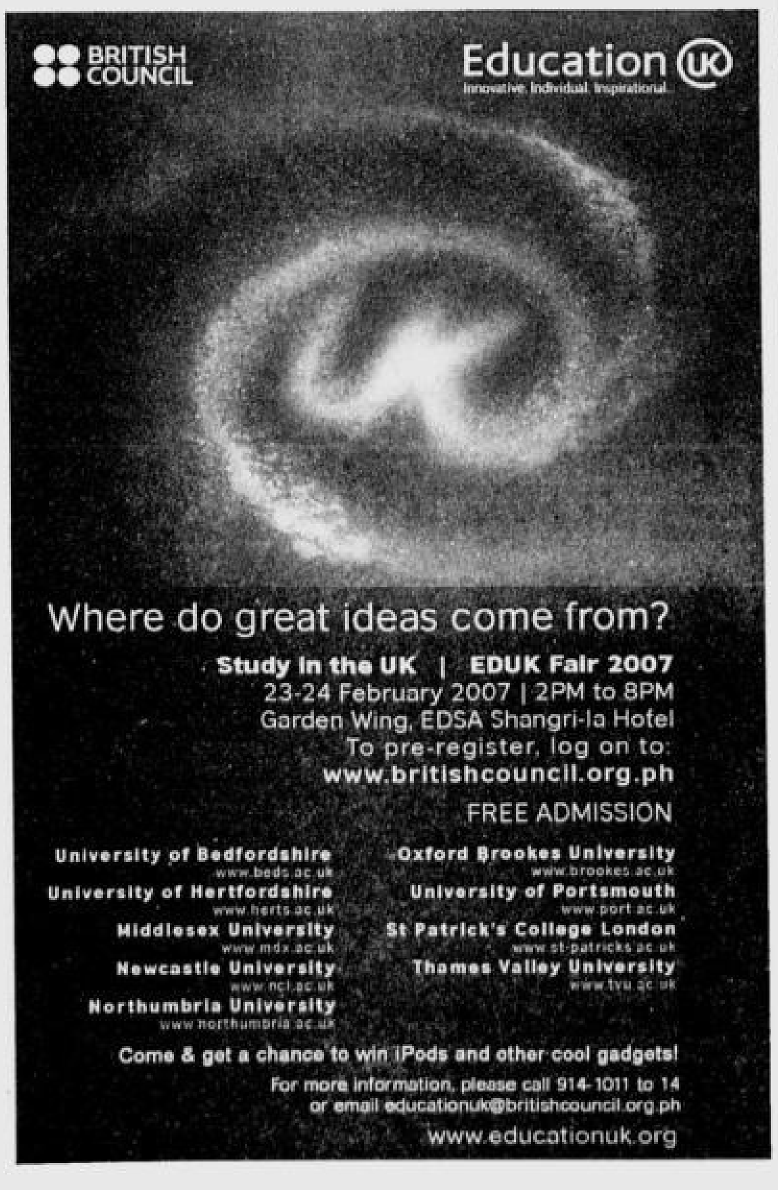
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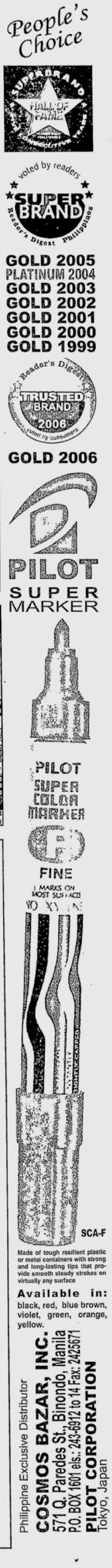
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Jumapao, Janice Marian Mamauag
Jurquina, Imelda Buenvineda
Kanapi, Roberto Alonzo
Kho, Hayden Jr De La Santa
Kingat, Luzviminda Dogwe
Kintanar, Bonnie Judar
Kolimlim, Rose Karen Reyes
Labian, Angeli Difuntorum
Laborte, Reyce Cristina Veluz
Labrador, Charina Carmencita Zamora
Labuguen, Reyna Glenn Carpentero
Lacambra, Jane Quintana
Ladica, Maritess Nacionales
Lagapa, Rajahatha Ae-Wan Actub
Lagman, Joseph Dominic Naynes
Laguitao-Pinas, Luricille Jamodiong
Lambas, Akisah Macapundag
Lampa, Sarah Jane Ong
Landicho, Ismaela Reyes
Lao, Norjana Lao
Lao, Oliver Dennis Ong
Laoat, Marychiel Antonio
Lapada, Mares Cecile Tiu
Lapinid, Maricris Enriquez
Lapuz, Sarah Jane Marcelino
Larena, Maximilian Garcia
Largado, Albert Gerald Yuzon
Lariosa, Carol Claire Remigio
Lasala, April Sunshine Carduza
Latorre, Glenda Silva
Latumbo, Albert Oro
Laurel, Sharon Azenith Ocampo
Laureto, Miyame Alas
Lazaro, Michael Bon
Ledesma, Sergei Antonio De Castro
Lee, Christian Cusi
Lee, Maryam-Lizbeth Rodriguez
Legaspi, Kristine Natalee Miralles
Lerias, Mayla Lagahuya
Lerio, Gay Therese Dominique Veloso
Leva, Charles Arthrie Patawaran
Liao, Gigi Parlade
Libed, Jacquelane Fernandez
Lim, Chriselle Corina Perez
Lim, Christine Sysuan
Lim, Sharon Osmeña
Lim, Shiella Barlizo
Limbo-Montemayor, Janet Malapitan
Linawagan, Angelo Lendio
Lingat, Tristan Regmond Asegurado
Liongson, Maria Erika Gono
Lipa, Maria Remedios Araneta
Lipae, Lily Jane Yap
Lipardo, Jacqueline Veloso
Lising, Richard Salas
Lizaso, Owen Parma
Llamases, Leah Christine Orlino
Llamasares, January Rull
Llorente, Violo Jr Albao
Llorin, Myrna Antonette Pastona
Loberiza, Jo Marie Gayapa
Logarta, Angelica Sarte
Lombos, Maria Rhea Bautista
Lomboy, Clarita Quiros
Lopez, Don Carlo Vincent Victor
Lopez, Elmer Kent Atup
Lopez, Maritess Vladimir Dimaandal
Lopo, Yeonnah Gutierrez
Lubrin, Eric Anthony Rimando
Lucas, Roberto Jr Baluyot
Lucero, Adrian Laiz
Luces, Trish Gardose
Lucop, Josela Bauyan
Lugue, Marvin Karlo Tolentino
Lumahan, Jamie Jr Agulno
Lumbao, Marichelle Lumbao
Lusanta, Charlene Pangan

M
Maaño, Michael Marc Cruz
Macabulos, Ritz Ryan De Lena
Macalling, Joeselyn Monares
Macalanda, Leni Perez
Macaraeg, Erwin Costales
Macarambon, Naifah Macarambon
Macaraya, Aliza Santiago
Macas, Mabel Magcal
Maceda, Mavinia Robeniol
Mackno, Aliya Bajunaid
Macrohon, Sarah Jean Lo
Mactal, Joselito Dizon
Madarang, Gerard Reyno
Maderal, Lalaine Amor Hugo
Madlang-Awa, Gerbert Santor
Madrid, Cheshire Therese Amando
Magada, Lourriene Rosos
Magbanua, Sheina Marie Jarobilla
Magsacay, Maria Theresa Quilal-Lan
Magsino, Diana Jean Dollolasa
Maguad, Raymund Antonio Aurello
Malahito, Ronald Allan Garcia
Malaluan, Mae Anne Karen Atienza
Malaluan, Philbert Garcia
Malanay, Mark Roland Fernandez
Maldo, Don Benicarlo
Male, Katherine Reyes
Malinao, Pete Cayobit
Mallorca, Haydee Len Capulong
Mampao, Hygeia Tura
Mana-Ay, Wilangelo Vistavilla
Manalo, Angela Tibayan
Manangbao, Lord Ivan Batungbacal
Manansala, Joan Mangilit
Manapat, Krizzy Eyra Sengco
Maneja, Lady Ann Salado
Mangampat, Aristotle Asto
Mangaser, Mitzi Casas
Mangondato, Nadhira Lininding
Mangubat, Reginald Lim
Manikan, Melissa Barbara Gonzalez
Manimtim, Ruel Tamondong
Maninang, Jennifer Alvero
Maningo, Nancy Chiva
Manjares, Paulyn Tonga
Mantac, Mary Precious Tongcua
Mantes, Raoul Jr Mizal
Manticayan, Shydin Usman
Manuel, Loralie Del Rosario
Manuel, Richard De Quiros
Manzanes, Lenelyn Espinosa
Manzano, Elenmarie Aldana
Maranan, Myla Joy Cabanit
Marasigan, Arnielyn Aguilar
Marasigan, Julius Cortes
Maravilla, Cynthia Adolfo
Marcos, Pauline Michelle Ong
Marges, Maria Mirra Barba
Marrero, Genna Dominguez
Martin, Mary Elizabeth Antiporda
Martinez, Jaymie Anne Calderon
Martinez, Jeanelyn Prudencio
Martinez, Joy Ruth Bato
Martirez, Mary Grace Michelle
Marty, Marie Montevirgen
Masangkay, Emaline Regulado
Masayon, Mylene Jimeno
Masna, Leah Atienza
Masorong, Julieta Sittie Salma II
Mcdonald, Karen Dado
Mcdonald, Kathleen Dado
Meana, Karen Yvette Sabrine
Medrano, Alma Lontoc
Mejia, Harold Pocholo Sancho
Mendiola, Carlo Paulo Tiansay
Mendoza, Derrick Gutierrez
Mendoza, Elaisa Sabino
Mendoza, Genevieve Gutierrez
Mendoza, Joseph Sadsad
Mendoza, Julet Dumalag
Mendoza, Lennore Correa
Mendoza, Marie Antonette Benedicto
Mendoza, Mark Joseph Mendoza
Mendoza, Odessa Ruiz
Mendoza, Shirley Punzalan
Meneses, Joana Marie Punla
Mercado, Howard Russel Salazar
Mercado, Mayella Reginaldo
Mercado, Michelle Joan Rosales
Merilles, Joanne Mae Manlangit
Mesa, Rowena Pazon
Miaga, Jose Bernardo Malinao
Micu, John Christian Dauz
Miguel, Czarina Sheherazade Mae
Millares, Besilda Calindas
Mindalano, Asliah Macaslag
Mitante, Maria Fe Aguado
Moises, Manuel Jr Ricaforte
Molina, Katrina Louise Caluag
Molina, Marie Donna De Vera
Mollaneda, Virgette Gay Pesalbon
Mondejar, Hanzel Mansilla
Montaos, Minette Gutierrez
Montecillo, Mary Ann Bello
Montemor, Angeli Paculanang
Montevirgen, Mary Richelle Cruz
Montevirgen, Sahlee Balanga
Morales, Celicidad Laarni Bobadilla
Morales, Joan Clarence Soriano
Moreno, Maria Kristine Quijano
Moreno, Maria Deanna Torre
Mortera, Stephen De Asis
Mosqueda, Feb Lloyd Sibala
Mundo, Nathalie Pancho
Mutalip, Al-Naseer Alih
Muñoz, Kathleen Mallari

N-O-P
Nacua, Raquel Garcia
Nagayo, Charmaine Lucio
Narag, Mercy Ramos
Nario, Melvin Ibarra
Natino, Amir Muhammad Paguntalan
Natividad, Leomar Guinaban
Natividad, Maria Vinella Florendo
Navarette, Janneth Papa
Navarro, Bernice Cecilio
Nazareno, Edgel Solis
Nerpiol, Lynor Naya
Nery, Vernon Jr Inobio
Ngoslab, Pryl Kim
Nicolas, Ana Liza Repaja
Nicolas, Shiela Marie Lastimosa
Nierras, Cherry Lynn Clemencio
Nievares, Sheba Octaviano
Nisce, Ma Katrina Carmina Yabes
Niñonuevo, Kristine Reyes
Noche, David Marlon Cachero
Noda, Shiro Ann Barroquiña
Nodado, Jefferson Uy
Noveras, Candice Muriel Diaz
Noveras, Neil Uy
Nuez, Christine Nucum
Nuruddin, Jubaira Idjiran
Oandasan, Darwin Unay
Obleflas, Jonathan Zapatos
Ocampo, Ruby Ellen Palafox
Ocenar, Mary Alleenette Garcia
Ocho, Rona Duco
Octavo, Alma Marie Manango
Ofilas, Khristine Quinay
Ogania, Lily Anne Manayao
Olaguer, Belinda Evangelista
Olea, Rachelle Palma
Olermo, Cynthia Cacho
Oliman, Karen Joson
Olivar, Karen Angel
Ombac, Maritess Alacar
Onglatco, Eleazar Jr Sina On
Oreto, Joy Ann Cabrera
Oriel, Ma Nella Lee Biglang-Awa
Orillaza, Agaphel Solpico
Orillo, Sheila Marie Abujan
Orquia, Sharon Rose Cervera
Ortaliz, Ma Thea Lora Garcia
Ortega, Rey Kevin Reyes
Ortego, Joyce Castillo
Ortiz, Maria Jasmin Duran
Osilla, Minda Lee Esguerra
Pacho, Florence Serneo
Pacpaco, Christina Paula Borgonio
Paderanga, Mark Anthony Real
Padilla, Marikit Corpuz
Pador, Mikhail Quiñon
Paez, Maria Fatima Margarita Suarez
Paglinawan, Arlyn Felix
Paglinawan, Sherwin Ong
Pagulo, Manuel Jr Paz
Palagud, Aracely Bacorro
Palami, John Genaro Emmanuel Castillo
Palaroan, Nicole Joy Cabudol
Palma, Kristine Leari Mercolesia
Palma, Ma Alma Junio
Palmones, Erwin Francis Ching
Palomo, Jed Bachao
Pamor-Tumanda, Quenna Maria Sablo
Panela, Ruden Isanan
Panes, Jearnnie Palencia
Pangan, Donna Genevieve Cueto
Panganiban, Jerome Ocampo
Panganiban, Minnette Aguilar
Pangcatan, Najib Magomnang
Panilan, Richili Ruth Villa
Papa, Patricia Ann Lucena
Paragas, Donna Rica Ramos
Paras, Christopher Jon Javellana
Paras, Homer Garcia
Pardo, Patrick Joseph Arcilla
Parreño, Charmaine Guce
Parrocha, Karen Corsino
Parungao, Rana Reem Canay
Pasawa, Emilda Grafe
Pascua, Marcy Paul Ibarra
Pascua, Orlando Jr Medina
Pascual, Erwin Figueroa
Pascual, Kathleen Gilay
Pascual, Marvi Corpuz
Pascual, Ray Davidson Victorio
Pasigon, Vanissa Daoal
Pasion, Cristopher Tallera
Pasion, Filipinas Ocampo
Pastor, Dino Edilberto Garcia
Patag, Maria Janna Garrovillas
Paulg, Teofila Gammad
Pelicano, Vannessa Lanuevo
Peneyro, Ivy Emily Mallari
Perez, Hazel Mia Caraet
Perez, Ryan Carlo Bello
Peña, Rea Patotoy
Peñaflorida, Jen Jen Enrile
Peñaranda, Lorielyn Chua
Piedad, Kathy Caña
Pilapil, Mari Cris Quiapo
Pilpa, Philiana Macopia
Pimentel, Teresa Joy Fajilan
Pinat, Ralph Jacinto Ponce
Pineda, Christopher Lauzon
Pineda, Jericho Robert Nacu
Pineda, Judylyn Reyes
Pinzon, Paulynn Marie Caballero
Pinzon-Verzola, Jonah Grace Parañal
Piodena, Marie Farangao
Pioquinto, Ragin Labung
Pita, Adrian Romero
Policarpio, Florita Guevarra
Policarpo, Karen Daphne Dela Cruz
Polintan, Cecile Hizon
Polistico, Joanna Marie Fernandez
Porneso, Jeferson Bayudan
Posadas, Goldwin Zambrano
Poscablo, Jela Cruz
Potato, Dino Adrian Yotoko
Provido, Lores Leticia Bascos
Provido, Mahrley Tanagon
Prudente-Que, Jebe Mae Cordero
Punongbayan, Dennis Jola
Punsalan, Joanne Albotra
Pura, Albert Karol Quiring

Q-R
Que, Cristina Lumasac
Querubin, Ian Jun Latoza
Quidato, Alphard Joseph Sandel
Quimboy, Marlene Araos
Quimpo, Rolando Jr Dilag
Quindipan, Rhia Von Magbanua
Quindor, Darcy Advincula
Quing, Federick Benjamin Lim
Quinzon, Ryan Acosta
Quitain, Dennis Dineros
Rabago, Ryan Edward Teodoro
Rahim, Maria Zalina Abdul
Ramel, Jeffrey Cortel
Ramiro, Jewehl Gay Ongogan
Ramos, Alexander Bajacan
Ramos, Charisse Ann Ramos
Ramos, Christian Arche
Ramos, Christine Montano
Ramos, Colin Jazul
Ramos, Maria Rebecca Masi
Ramos, Mary Kahreen Mamaril
Ramos, Noel Alvarez
Ramos, Rossdy Salic
Ranjo, Jonelyn Lazaro
Rapisura, Carie Quitiquit
Rasalan, Rocamia Fernandez
Razon, Tamara Louise Jethmal
Rebares, Benwyn Barretto
Rebong, Maria Victoria Faustino
Recongco, Mildred Tolentino
Recto, Rina Biadora
Recto, Richard Rodrigo Singson
Red, John Jone Profeta
Redor, Maria Flora Yoardolaza
Refuerzo, Francis Ramilo
Regino, Neil Borres
Reinoso, Jhorose Pagala
Rejano, Michelle Riego
Remo, Rubirose Galvez
Remulla, Sherwin Jade Niño Melo
Rengquijo, Alfonso Jr Adan
Retuta, Alma Salazar
Revilla, Reggie Rozaldo
Reyes, Arlyn Frances Garcia
Reyes, Ella Samper
Reyes, Janice Miguel
Reyes, Mary Anne Clarissa Ruiz
Ricardo, Lorelie Zuñiga
Ridon, John Paul Terry Lacuanan
Rivadelo-Urbiztondo, Clarice Cajucom
Rivas, Paolo Angelo Villanueva
Rivera, Joseph Anthony Reyes
Rivera, Kay Bacong
Rivera, Racquel Salvadora
Riveral, Lowell Tan
Roa, Roselle Morano
Rodrigo, Arnel Galenzoga
Rodriguez, Annabelle Marilo Damonsong
Rodriguez, Don Musa
Rodriguez, Margarita Chavez
Rodriguez, Maria Carla Jo Miranda
Romero, Anne Marie Kristine Samonte
Romero, Ernesto Manuel Jr Cheng
Romero, Marjorie Myrna Granale
Romero-Cuaresma, Christina Salvado
Romualdez, Almira Karla Karinne Muñoz
Romuga, Cyrus Wendell Quibir
Rosales, Mae Jordas
Rosario, Leslie Marie Libed
Rubio, Rover Danga
Ruiz, Glicery Joy Sison
Ruiz, Jovendino Jr Sarmiento
Ruiz, Roald Jason Macall
Rumias, Loi Marie Escalante
Rupido, Mark Anthony Ordinario

S
Sabili, Catherine Anne Cervas
Sacay, Natalie Limbaroc
Sacdal, Leilanie Manangan
Sacdalan, Elijinese Marie Escobar
Sadang, Agatha Dulce Mandac
Salalima, Aileen Grace Navarro
Salamat, Rodolfo Jr Jimenez
Salazar, Christian Mariano
Salazar, Melba Samilin
Salazar, Sharon Rose Charity Sumilbcay
Salvador, Maria Rita Angela Bonuan
Salvana, John Peter Paul Pascual
Sampaga, Russel Macabangun
San Juan, Karen Kristine Villalon
Sanchez, Karl Patrick Ramirez
Sanchez, Ronaldo Estrada
Sandalo, Rachelle Ong
Sangkula, Mary Ann Paña
Sanlatan, Jay-Lord Sajor
Santiago, Iris Gretel Almoro
Santos, Elmer Guiraldo
Santos, Imee Villanueva
Santos, Luanne Jill Lengson
Santos, Ronaldo Quintero
Santos, Stephen Somodio
Sapanghila, Ivy Fausto
Sapnu, Karren Kaye Del Rosario
Saransamun, Asnia Dimapi
Sarao, Kathryn Bautista
Sarapuddin, Jamar Arpa
Saribul, Patnuharda Nur
Sarmiento, Andeylef Joy Tandoc
Sarmiento, Ed Steven Crisostomo
Sarmiento, Michael Nick Wino
Saulog, Renee Ghayne Dayrit
Savedia, Charo Martha Libranda
Sayo, Ana Ria Lontok
Sayson, Marlon Jr Lepiten
Segador, Guillen Tutay
Segocio, Hermie De Leon
Segui, Daisy Runas
Senado, Cecilia Paz
Sendon, Yvonne Nery
Serazon, Merry Grace Galon
Sergio, Audrey Rose Felicity Callanta
Sergio, Michael Angelo Hassan
Sew, Jacqueline Adriano
Sia, Jayson Bidong
Siapno, Debrelle Lou Puchero
Sibug, Joseph Ryan Jr Tomale
Sicat, Paula Rodriguez
Siguenza, Maria Lyza Castillo
Sim, Maria Cheng Lyn Landingin
Sincero, Jed Voltaire Gadingan
Sinchioco, Analyn Villareal
Siriban, Marivel Gaceta
Sison, Jennifer Gatchalian
So, Marichelle Pe
Sobremonte, Irish Cabanban
Soliman, Jeanette May Umali
Sonon, Katherine Castillo
Sonza-Llenes, Daisy Therese Musni
Soriano, Natalia Palaganas
Soriño, Christian King Nadera
Sta Maria, Jaclyn Anne Nuñez
Sta Prisca, Ruy Lucilo
Subida, Alexander Sepulveda
Sudario, Aimee Glory De La Victoria
Sumadchat, Marguerite Louise Gozun
Sunga, Carmela Balagtas
Sunico, Charmagne Anne Mata
Suresca, Leuther Velete
Sy, Vanessa Vamenta

T-U-V
Tabladillo, Stephen Bumanglag
Tablante, Charlene Villanueva
Taboada, Karen Dacuyan
Tabogader, Ranelyn Sebastian
Tabucanon, Samuel Jr Castillo
Tadena, Maria Ludivina Urian
Tagorda, Kathleen Gamit
Tagud, Jefferson Rosales
Tamayo, Lady Ann Sumook
Tambo, Christopher Brian Culala
Tan, Gladys Ann Gabutan
Tan, Katherine Chieng
Tan, Kathyrn Natalie Uy
Tan, Michael Vincent Luy
Tanamal, Joje Weva Glee Cabahug
Tangonan, Villamor Jr Lacsa
Tanseco, Hyacinth Claire Pine
Tapia, Maidy Loyola
Tawagon, Van Linus Ryan Booc
Tañala, Marivic Yobia
Te, Mary Lou Ty
Teppang, Genalene Inocencio
Teus, Merry Ann Sabang
Tiangson, Von-Carlo Enrique
Tibon, Christian John Geroso
Tindick, Nurijam Gupeteo
Tingkahan, Moammar Ladjaalam
Toledo, Marilyn Miguel
Tolentino, Catherine Castro
Tonelete, Sheryll Martin
Tormon, Trino Jesse Rojas
Torregosa, Cherryl Manatad
Torreña, Stella Marie Drueco
Tosino, Ma Rosalyn Febrin
Toting, Judith Guardiana
Tria, Michelle Tejadilla
Trifalgar, Jamie Dacoco
Trinidad, Adelfo Jose Jr Fojas
Trinidad, Emmy Kathryn Relampagos
Trinidad, Kathleen Anne Olarte
Trojillo, Geronimo III Rosario
Tuazon, Alain Blue David
Tubo, Chona Magnaye
Tulod, Christopher Peliño
Tumanda, Nectarinia Alibasa
Tupas, Geovanette Tumlos
Tysmans, Tanya Louisse Lapid
Udtuhan, Lilybelle Cotoner
Umayam, Filipinas Junio
Unira, Cristeta Irineo
Urayani, Marivee Corpuz
Urayani, Nonette Corpuz
Urbano, Lorrie Suzette Jurado
Uy, Angelique Yu
Uy, Ana Mia Rica De Dios
Uy, Christian Abela
Uy, Jocelyn Simon
Uy, Lester Sy
Uy, Maricris Marquita
Uybengkee, Sheila Marie Rubillar
Valdecantos, Grace De Leon
Valdez, Jill Landingin
Valdez, Neil Alcober
Valencia, Vinzon Vida
Valencia, Marichu Olegario
Valles, Lorraine Rose Lastimoza
Vasquez, Desiree Taboada
Velasco, Christopher Pua
Veliganilao, Leva Josie Cajes
Veloso, Geraldine Ardiente
Venturina, Nely Molina
Vergara, Christine Marie Mendoza
Vergonio, Jeremy Quiñones
Verora, Tania Victorica Orteza
Viado, Greg Gerard Santos
Victoria, Katrina Villacruels
Viernes, Ma Teresa Barja
Viernes, Tricia May Calipjo
Villa, Christopher Parreñas
Villador, Amherstia Baldonado
Villafuerte, Patrick Gerard Festejo
Villamor, Rogelio John Jr Del Mar
Villanueva, Lesley Sumbilon
Villanueva, Geraldine Aclan
Villarosa, Ann Margaret Abelardo
Villavicencio, Charity Cruz
Villegas, Friday Que
Villena, Apple Jane Pangan
Vistan, Jaimee Ann Ramos
Vizcarra, Valerie Therese Claravall

W-Y-Z
Wadingan, Nani Lea Dom-Ayan
Yabut, Joan Visda
Yaeso, Ma Hope Joy Barrera
Yague-Valdez, Madonna Ifurung
Yambao, Arman Caballo
Yap, Justine Iris Cunanan
Yatco, Kristyn Aguilar
Young, John Jr Miralles
Yu, Cressida Villaroman
Yu, Shiela Mae Cristobal
Yumang, Mariza Mercado
Zacarias, Roland Dionisio
Zaide, Anna Gema Buenafe
Zales, Joeffrey Lozano
Zamora, Ana Claudine Rosario
Zapanta, Allan Frederick Jarlego
Zara, Hannah Ethrela Sasbad
Zerrudo, Eric Caballero
Zubiri, Maria Theresa Concepcion

Palparan: At the center of a growing storm

PALPARAN: 'Dead man walking'

WHEN ARMY MAJ. GEN. JOVITO Palparan retired from the military last year, the communist New People's Army (NPA) said he was a "dead man walking."

Palparan later described the threat as an "honor," coming from the NPA.

He boasted that despite the threat, he still picked up his groceries and went to the movies alone, without bodyguards.

Loathed by the left, who call him the "butcher," Palparan, now in semi-retirement, is finding himself at the center of a growing storm over the political killings in the country.

The findings of a special government commission of inquiry into extrajudicial killings said Palparan "left a trail of blood or bodies in his wake wherever he was assigned."

The findings of the Melo Commission said there was "circumstantial evidence" linking Palparan, 56, to the killings of leftists.

But the mild-mannered former general, married to a dentist, with three children, makes no apologies about his hardline approach to the country's 39-year-old communist insurgency.

Others see Palparan as a true patriot defending his country from the scourge of communism.

Even President Macapagal-Arroyo praised him during her State of the Nation Address last year when she said: "General Palparan will not back down until the darkness of terror gives way to the dawn of freedom." Now her favored general is finding himself at the center of a growing storm that will not go away.

Retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo's report has rocked the administration and the military, which is out to defend one of its own.

But for rights activists, it has vindicated much of what they have been saying for years.

The Melo Report said Palparan and his men could have been "responsible for an undetermined number of killings by allowing, tolerating and even encouraging the killings."

The general, who has fought Muslim rebels, rightist military coup plotters and even served a short stint with the Philippine contingent in Iraq in 2004, is now facing one of his biggest battles.

Palparan has denied any wrongdoing, but said the civilian populace in areas where he operated might have been inspired by his example to take revenge on the guerrillas who had abused them.

"Many of these people who have been victims or relatives of the victims also desire to exact revenge. They take action by themselves, take the law into their hands because they feel that justice is not coming," Palparan said.

He directly accused leftist activists, political parties and nongovernment organizations of being fronts for the rebels, saying "it's actually ... the militants and the party-list organizations who are the ones directing or commanding the NPA."

The communists hate him because, "I confront them in all aspects," not just on the battlefield but in their intelligence networks, support groups and propaganda campaigns, Palparan said.

After his retirement, Palparan has remained Ms Arroyo's chief adviser on her campaign to crush the NPA.

The President has repeatedly backed Palparan, and said he was central to defeating the communists before she steps down in 2010.

"Jovito Palparan will stand up to the enemy," she has said.

Unlike other military officers who gained celebrity status in this country, Palparan is not tall, muscular or good-looking, nor is he a graduate of the elite Philippine Military Academy (PMA).

He rose through the ranks as a reservist, and earned the reputation of being a good field strategist who had the President's ear. *AFP*

Military counterattacks

From page A1

Esperon called the news conference to comment on the initial results of Alston's 10-day fact-finding mission, as well as to raise "disagreements" with the findings of the Melo Commission, both of which held the military accountable for the killings. *(Story on this page).*

"[Alston's UN team] said we were in denial... I deny that," Esperon said in reaction to Alston's statement that the military "remains in a state of almost total denial" about the killings.

"We recognize there are extrajudicial killings. We recognize that these are happening. That is why we appreciate that there is such a thing as a Melo Commission, and ... even if Mr. Alston was here for only 10 days, it's certainly something we have to reckon with. The output is substantive," Esperon said.

He added that Alston "might be in a state of denial himself," citing the latter's supposed "refusal to believe that the CPP-NPA could perpetrate such killings."

Credibility

The UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions was briefed by defense and military officials last week, and furnished a copy of the AFP report that the CPP-NPA was responsible for 1,227 liquidations.

Esperon said Alston had mentioned that the military report on the CPP-NPA liquidations was not credible because the NPA did not admit to the murders and human rights organizations did not document them.

"So what is he telling us? That if it is owned by the NPA it is credible? Is he saying that the NPA is more credible than me, or the AFP?" Esperon said.

Asked if he thought Alston was biased for the Left, he said: "It's up to you to conclude."

Pressed further on why he thought Alston refused to believe the military report, Esperon said he did not know. "But I know that on the first day that he was here, he talked to seven groups [such as] Karapatan, Bayan, Gabriela, among others."

Esperon also scoffed at Alston's questioning of the government's counterinsurgency program:

"I do not know how familiar he is with other insurgencies, but as he admits, he is here for the first time and stayed here for the last 10 days.

"We have been fighting the communist insurgency for 39 years and I have been fighting it for the last 33 years. I will not even claim expertise in this matter."

Palparan

Asked to comment on Alston's statement that Esperon merely phoned retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan about the killings, the chief of staff said he did not only call Palparan several times but also conducted "counterintelligence" activities to check on the allegations against the officer whom militant groups had labeled a *berdugo* (butcher).

He said he had also ordered Palparan to bring in the officers and men implicated in the killings.

He added that the military had so far brought in for investigation six soldiers named by the Melo Commission.

Esperon said he did not consider Alston's initial findings damaging to the military.

"We agree with him that when [human rights group] Karapatan made the allegations, there was the element of propaganda. Otherwise, [Karapatan] should also have been more interested in appearing before the Melo Commission," he said.

Karapatan's absence at the hearings called by the Melo Commission "leads us to believe that they only ... want to accuse [the military] but never want to solve the problem."

Thankful

As if to further prove his point against Karapatan, Esperon brought to the news conference the two men that the human rights group had said had been executed by the military—Edwin Mascarinas and Renato Bugtong.

"It's good that you are alive and not, as Karapatan said, killed by the AFP," he said.

Despite Alston's statements, Esperon said he was thankful to the UN official because the latter's visit had "given us another inspiration to uphold human rights and international humanitarian laws."

As for the Melo Report, Esperon wondered why the commission covered only the killings of activists and not the 1,227 purported NPA liquidations.

"Were these victims categorized as members of activist organizations?" he said.

He also wondered why the commission concluded that there was no NPA purge and why it did not consider the AFP report of a document it seized in May 2006 in Quezon purportedly showing that the CPP Central Committee had ordered the elimination of enemies within its ranks.

But for all that, Esperon said that through the commission, the military had taken certain steps to address the issue, including instructing unit commanders to report killings in their areas, and activating an office to supervise the training and education of soldiers and officers on human rights, among other things.

Alston is not UN

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez continued his tirade against Alston, saying the latter's views did not necessarily reflect that of the United Nations.

Gonzalez lamented that Alston's statements were being magnified in newspaper headlines when the latter, he said, had only "a minor role" in the UN.

"Why do you say that Alston is the UN? Alston is not the UN, nor is one bishop the CBCP (Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines). Why would you attribute [his statements to] the UN? That's a legitimate [complaint] because we are magnifying something coming from somebody who is nothing," Gonzalez told reporters.

"For people who don't know how to discern properly, it's as if the UN has passed judgment on us, and it is totally false," he said.

Gonzalez said Alston's report would not necessarily be discussed by the UN General Assembly. He said the report would first have to be sent to and debated in the UN Commission on Human Rights.

"Why will you say [he is the] UN? He's just a *muchacho* (functionary) there. He's a rapporteur," Gonzalez said.

The justice secretary also said he expected former Chief Justice Hilario Davide to defend the Philippines against any derogatory report from Alston at the UN Commission for Human Rights.

With reports from Leila B. Salaverria; Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.; Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Inquirer Visayas

From 'brainwashed' to 'brain-dead'

SEN. AQUILINO PIMENTEL JR. said the Arroyo administration should focus its resources on prosecuting the perpetrators of the extrajudicial killings instead of discrediting Alston.

Pimentel cited Gonzalez's remarks as typifying what Alston had described as the military's state of almost total denial.

"It is unfortunate that Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez is trying to discredit Alston's investigation by coming up with a baseless and ridiculous insinuation that the UN representative was brainwashed by leaders of leftist groups into reaching a conclusion that would put the government and the military in a bad light," Pimentel said, adding:

"If Professor Alston was brainwashed, Secretary Gonzalez is brain-dead. He continues to defend the indefensible. Perpetrators of extrajudicial killings should be stopped and punished by the government."

Asked to comment on Pimentel's remarks, Gonzalez challenged the senator to a debate to prove his mental state.

Gonzalez also said Pimentel seemed to love Alston more than he did the Philippines.

Bishops hail Melo report release

JARO ARCHBISHOP AND CBCP president Angel Lagdameo welcomed Alston's initial findings, saying: "I am glad that this has been brought to the consciousness of our government through the [representative] of the United Nations. They are willing to help us, therefore, we should help them also."

Lagdameo also welcomed the release of the Melo Report, which, he said, would "at least satisfy the curiosity of the people."

The CBCP president had earlier called for public disclosure of the report.

Also yesterday, the 500,000-strong International Federation of Journalists expressed support for Alston's mission statement and called for decisive government action to stop the killings.

"We agree with Professor Alston that not enough has been done to prevent and solve these murder cases. We agree with Alston that the AFP has been derelict in its duty to investigate allegations that its members have been responsible for some of these killings," the federation said in a statement.

Pinoy lawyer vouches for Alston's integrity

By Alcuin Papa

THERE'S NO BRAINWASHING the United Nations' special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings, a former student of his said yesterday.

Lawyer Ibarra Gutierrez III, head of the University of the Philippines Law Center's Institute of Human Rights, told the INQUIRER that it would be "virtually impossible" for the Left or any political group to influence Philip Alston.

Gutierrez took Alston's human rights course at New York University in 2003 as a Fulbright scholar.

"His stature internationally is that of an acknowledged expert in human rights, not only as an advocate but also as an academic. Given his wealth of experience and his stature in the human rights community, I doubt it would be easy to fool him. Brainwashed? I seriously doubt that," Gutierrez said.

The lawyer was reacting to statements made by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez that Alston had been "brainwashed" by leftists and was biased because he spoke with leftist groups first before the government.

"Part of the investigation is to get the view of different people, so you don't get the sole view of government. It's incredible to believe that someone as experienced and recognized as an expert in the field could be fooled by leftists or allow himself to be used. It's completely incredible. I'm almost embarrassed for him (Gonzalez)," Gutierrez said.

He also described Alston as having had experience in investigating human rights cases "in countries that are more troubled than ours, [and] this is not his first time."

He added: "Professor Alston is familiar with how these things play out. In many situations, propaganda and the political actors are in play. One of the first things you learn is how to get to the core of the issue in a maze of stories and allegations. Given his extensive experience, I don't think he will be susceptible to any influence."

Melo report tags Palparan 'prime suspect' in killings

From page A1

journalists since 2001.

It said "there is no direct evidence, but only circumstantial evidence, linking some elements in the military to the killings."

More than 800 people, mostly activists, have been murdered or reported missing since Ms Arroyo came to power in 2001, according to the human rights group Karapatan.

Circumstantial evidence

The military claims that most of the deaths were due to internal fighting in the Communist Party of the Philippines and its military arm, the New People's Army.

While the "circumstantial" evidence might not be enough to draw a conviction in a court of law, the report said, there appeared to be little doubt about who was ultimately behind the bloodshed.

"The only other theory left is that certain elements within or connected to some military officers are responsible for the killings," it said.

"The victims, according to General Palparan and others, were enemies of the state, hence, their neutralization."

Ms Arroyo formed the Melo Commission last August in response to a clamor from several quarters, including the European Union and other countries, for the Philippine government to investigate the killings.

It submitted a preliminary report to Malacañang last month.

Command responsibility

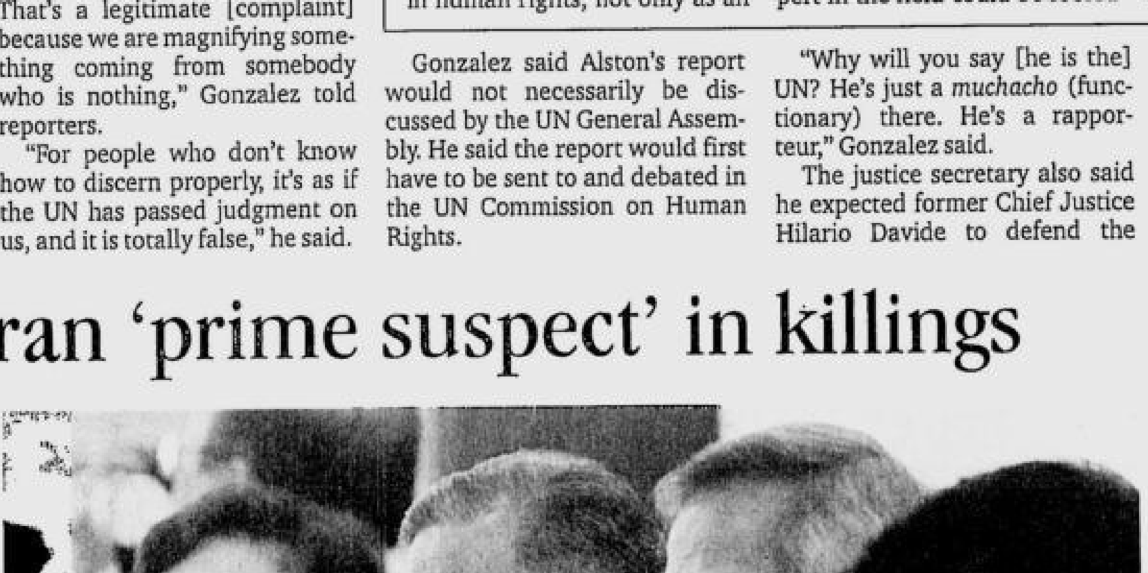
The report proposed a new law to "maintain strict chain of command responsibility with respect to extrajudicial killings."

Others recommendations:

- Let an independent civilian body that has control of its budget investigate the killings.
- Create a special team of competent and well-trained prosecutors to handle the trial of cases.
- Give highest priority to the improvement, strengthening and funding of the Witness Protection Program.
- Enhance the investigative capabilities of the Philippine National Police and National Bureau of Investigation.
- Orient and train properly security forces "to make them conscious of the prevailing doctrines of command responsibility and their ramifications.

'Alternative procedures'

Overall, the report said: "There is no official or sanctioned policy on the part of the military or its civilian superiors to resort to what others euphemistically call 'alternative procedures'—meaning illegal liquidation."



THE MELO Commission members are, from left, Juan de Dios Pueblos (partly hidden), Nelia Gonzaales, chair Jose R.Melo, Jovencito Zuño and Nestor Mantaring. INQUIRER PHOTO

It even praised the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) for "remain(ing) whole to the Constitution."

Ms Arroyo refused to talk about the report during the roundtable discussion yesterday in Malacañang.

But she didn't regret inviting Alston to the country to investigate the killings.

"No, I don't regret it," said the President, who quickly told reporters that Secretary Ignacio Bunye had prepared a statement about it.

Alston had blamed the military for the killings on Thursday, saying it should "acknowledge" this and conduct a "genuine" inquiry.

Prosecute perpetrators

With the release of the Melo report, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the Arroyo administration should focus its resources on prosecuting perpetrators of the killings instead of discrediting Alston. *(See related sidebar above.)*

Sen. Richard J. Gordon called on the government to keep the military in [illegible] after it was largely blamed by Alston for most of the killings.

Milestone

"It is important to show the world and especially our people that we are doing something about it," Gordon said.

Bunye said the report, albeit "incomplete," was a "milestone in our nation."

The families of the victims had refused to testify before the probe body, but readily told their stories to Alston.

"For the first time in a generation, we have begun to lift the veil of the violence that has beset our nation for too long. This is a significant step forward to bringing the perpetrators of political violence to justice," Bunye said.

Painful to read

He also said it was "painful" to read the report's findings that some members of the military "may have been involved in some of the crimes just as it is devastating when members of the New People's Army take action to kill innocent victims or even their comrades.

"The issue, though, is not about left or right, it is about right or wrong. And on this point, we must be united in seeking justice," Bunye said.

The official copy of the report was handed to Paolo Romero, president of the Malacañang Press Corps, by Bunye before noon yesterday.

It was signed by former Supreme Court Justice Jose A.R. Melo, the head of the commission, and members Director Nestor Mantaring of the National Bureau of Investigation, Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, University of the Philippines Regent Nelia Gonzalez and Butuan Bishop Juan de Dios Pueblos.

Lawyer Rogelio Vinluan also signed as general counsel of the commission. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and AFP*

EDSA I REMEMBERED: The commemoration of People Power on Edsa 21 years ago is held at the Libingan ng mga Bayani. President Arroyo leads the dignitaries who included former President Fidel Ramos, a key player of Edsa I, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon. Feb. 22 marks the first day of the four-day peaceful revolt that culminated in the ouster of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. REM ZAMORA

Malacañang releases 2

From page A1

spouse Julieta Delima-Sison, delivered a speech, titled "The Philippine Crisis and Revolution," on March 4, 1987, but a copy of the video was recovered from an NPA camp only recently, according to the staffer of the Palace official.

Malacañang yesterday revived the charge that the party-list groups in the House previously associated with the CPP were still working to advance the communists' cause.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said at his regular press briefing that Sison had been caught on tape admitting that Bayan and other groups were still engaged in a protracted battle to overthrow the government.

"They are really front organizations," said Ermita.

He pointed out that Sison had said that the time would come that "communists would bring down the government through armed struggle and legal struggle."

Ermita said the video was shown to Alston.

"What are the activities of the National Democratic Front?" asked Ermita.

Pork barrel

He said the military had tagged some leftist groups as "enemies of the state" for using their congressional Priority Development Assistance Fund, or pork barrel, to help the New People's Army, the armed wing of the CPP.

Esperon qualified his statements about leftist organizations, saying that these groups were not the enemies of the state but the "underground" ones.

Denounce violence

Esperon said the government welcomed leftist organizations that want to enter the mainstream through the party-list system.

"What I'm saying is Bayan, if it's not connected with the NPA, should denounce the violence of the NPA," he said. "If it can denounce the violence of the NPA, then it's very clear where it stands."

"I would like to repeat our reminders to our soldiers that these are legal organizations. What we are after are the underground organizations," Esperon also said.

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PROVINCE OF ISABELA
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Office of the Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Isabela, through its Bids and Awards Committee, is inviting interested distributors, wholesalers and/or suppliers to apply for eligibility *and to participate in the sealed competitive bidding for the procurement of COMPUTER SETS, COMPUTER PARTS & ACCESSORIES for various Offices in the Province of Isabela.*

All particulars relative to the eligibility, bid evaluation, and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

SCHEDULE OF BIDDING ACTIVITIES:

Availability of Bid Documents	February 26-27, 2007, 8 AM to 5 PM at the BAC Secretariat's Office, Capitol, Ilagan, Isabela
Pre-Bid Conference	February 28, 2007 at 10 AM, Governor's Mini-Conference Hall, Capitol, Ilagan, Isabela
Deadline of Submission of Eligibility	March 12, 2007 at 9:30 AM. BAC Secretariat's Office, Capitol, Ilagan, Isabela
Opening of Bids	March 12, 2007 at 10:00 AM, Governor's Mini-Conference Hall, Capitol, Ilagan, Isabela
Approved Budget for the Contract	P1,884,000.00

Complete set of bid proposals/forms may be acquired from the BAC Secretariat's Office, Capitol, Ilagan, Isabela upon payment of non-refundable bidding fee of One Thousand Six Hundred Pesos (P1,600.00) at the Provincial Treasurer's Office.

The Provincial Government of Isabela reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal has been evaluated by the BAC as the most advantageous. The Provincial Government assumes no obligations whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that they may incur in the preparation of their bids; neither does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) MA. THERESA ARANETA-FLORES
BAC Chairperson

(PDI–February 23, 2007)

Jinggoy tapped to replace JV . . .

From page A1

place his half-brother, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, who would start his reelection campaign by March 29.

The source said some GO senatorial candidates were unimpressed with the handling of the opposition slate's initial campaign strategy, specifically the lack of planning and organization.

GO twice changed the venue of its proclamation rally—from Makati City to San Juan then to Plaza Miranda in Manila.

But GO spokesperson Adel Tamano vouched for the competence of Ejercito as a campaign manager.

"The candidates are far from unimpressed. In fact, they are very impressed with his performance," Tamano told the INQUIRER.

"He is a very hardworking campaign manager. In fact, he's getting darker more than the candidates themselves (as he goes on campaign sorties under the sun)," the spokesperson said of Ejercito.

In a phone interview, Senator Estrada said he had not yet made up his mind on whether to the lead in GO.

"I've been offered but I will make my decision in the next few days," he said.

SEN. JINGGOY ESTRADA

SAN JUAN MAYOR JV EJERCITO

More savvy politician

The senator is seen as a more savvy political strategist than his younger brother, having campaigned nationwide since his father ran for senator in 1992.

Senator Estrada is also being recruited for his broad links to local government officials. He served as president of the League of Municipalities during his own his stint as San Juan mayor.

"We expect him to give us some political muscle in the local level and offset some the advantage of the administration in this area," said the source.

Akba

From page A1

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MARKET MASTERS
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3RD MARKET MASTERS CONFERENCE
BRAND & TRADE INITIATIVES
MARCH 21, 2007, 9:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M.
BALLROOM, MANDARIN ORIENTAL HOTEL, MAKATI CITY

Session 1: How To Use Blue Ocean Strategy To Develop and Launch New Products That Will Make Competition Play Catch Up
Josiah Go, Chairman, Mansmith and Fielders, Inc.

Session 2: How To Strategize Thru A Brand Portfolio of Products
Dondi Gomez, Category Director for Skin and Deodorants and Head of Marketing Training, Unilever Philippines

Session 3: How To Formulate Your Brand DNA for Success
Weena Pineda, VP-Corporate Marketing, Splash Holdings

Session 4: How To Benefit From In-Store Consumer Behavior
Benedicto Cid, Managing Director, AC Nielsen Philippines

Session 5: How Suppliers Can Maximize Retail Investment
Wilson Lim, President, Abenson, Waltermart & ElectroWorld Group and Joanne Lim, Managing Director, Waltermart Supermarket

As in previous years, the entire net proceeds of this conference will go to the various advocacies of Mansmith like MarkProf, CPT-CSA,etc. Please support these worthwhile causes while you learn from Mansmith's 3rd Market Masters Conference.

Regular Rate: P 6,888 (if paid during February 2007) **Onsite Rate:** P 7,888 (if paid during March 2007)

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DOLE to oversee retake of leal

From page A1

order for the approval of President Macapagal-Arroyo directing the DOLE, through the Board of Nursing (BON), to administer a voluntary retake of Tests 3 and 5, the questions and answers of which had been leaked by certain review centers to examinees.

On Feb. 14, the United States' Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools said it would deny VisaScreen certificates to those who passed the 2006 licensure exam and who now wanted to seek working visas for employment in US hospitals.

On Feb. 16, Ms Arroyo said her administration would appeal the CGFNS decision.

But Brion yesterday told reporters that the DOLE and representatives of the commission

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City • Tel. Nos. (632)920-6401*(632)920-6446
E-mail: member_relations@sss.gov.ph*Web site http://www.sss.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

IAEB No. 2007-003-Goods

REPLACEMENT OF LIGHTING FIXTURES AT MAC BUILDING & RETROFITTING/ DELAMPING OF LIGHTING FIXTURES AT MAIN BUILDING

Project Description	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) & Source of Fund	Delivery/ Completion Period	Date/Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
			Pre-bid Conference	Deadline Opening of 3 Envelopes/ Bids	
Replacement of Lighting Fixtures at MAC Bldg. and Retrofitting Delamping of the existing Lighting Fixtures at selected offices of the SSS Main Building *· Improve lighting illumination level of lighting fixture with less power consumption* *NOTE: THIS IS THE 2nd RE-PUBLICATION.*	*P2,697,383.13* *MR Bldg. - Electro-Mechanical System*	*90 calendar days*	*March 02, 2007, 2:00p.m.*	*March 16, 2007, 2:00p.m.*	*P2,500.00*

1. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The SSS now invites Bids from eligible bidders for Phase 1, the replacement of the existing 222 sets 2x40W with new 2x36W lighting fixtures equipped with high performance aluminum reflector with minimum illumination output in lux at (250-500-250, side-center-side positions respectively at 0.90m distance from center for both sides and 2.1m height to the working plane) for the MAC Bldg. & Phase 2, Retrofitting/Delamping of existing 2x36W with 1x36W equipped with high performance aluminum reflector with minimum illumination output in lux at (160-260-160, side-center-side positions respectively and at 0.61m distance from center for both sides and at 1.8m height to the working plane) for the selected offices of the Main Building. This aims to reduce and/or minimize power consumption without necessarily sacrificing the illumination output of the lighting fixtures in the office areas. Delivery of GOODS is required within the period specified above to commence two (2) days after contract signing/receipt of Purchase Order (PO). The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instruction to Bidders (ITB).
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section I of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bider (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the ***SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM*** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee. The method of payment will be on a cash basis payable at the SSS Cashiering Department, SSS Main Bldg., Ground Floor, upon accomplishment of SSS Form R-6. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Building on the deadline specified above. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and amount indicated in the Bid Tender Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be held at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the given address.
9. The ***SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bids and Awards Committee
The Secretariat
6th Floor, SSS Main Building
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City • Tel # 922-2991, 924-7380, 920-6401 local 5491
Email – bac@sss.gov.ph • Facsimile number – (02) 924-7380

THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI - Feb. 23, 2007)

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use deputy minority tional Security Ad- onzales and Jesuit ntengan of carrying war because of the unfounded" allega- Muna, Anakpawis e diverting public round movement.

Gonzales should th about their fa- -student relation- admit the fact that tes in the Partido alista ng Pilipinas s a foil to the Left," said Ocampo.

Intengan is among the PDSP founders and is currently the head of the PDSP education committee, while Gonzales is the PDSP chair, according to Ocampo.

Ocampo said Intengan should not hide behind the Jesuit name and conceal his decades-old anti-Left bias as an ideologue of the PDSP.

"That Intengan is a rabid, anti-Left cleric and his relationship with Gonzales should already be a warning to those who dare read the rubbish that he dishes out," he said.

The Bayan Muna lawmaker challenged Gonzales to file the appropriate charges against the three party-list organizations "if he truly possesses the tons of evidence and dozens of witnesses he purportedly holds."

Progressive classes

In his speech, Sison said at the time that Bayan was the biggest group with over 2 million members and more than 1,000 member-organizations.

He said that while there were forces of armed revolution, "there are legal democratic forces in the Philippines."

Sison identified this "broad expression" of the movement as the "progressive classes like the working class, peasantry and the middle social strata.

"These classes of social strata have their expression in political parties, organizations and articulate individuals. All these belong to the national democratic movement insofar as they espouse the line of national liberation and democracy against US domination and landlord exploitation," he said.

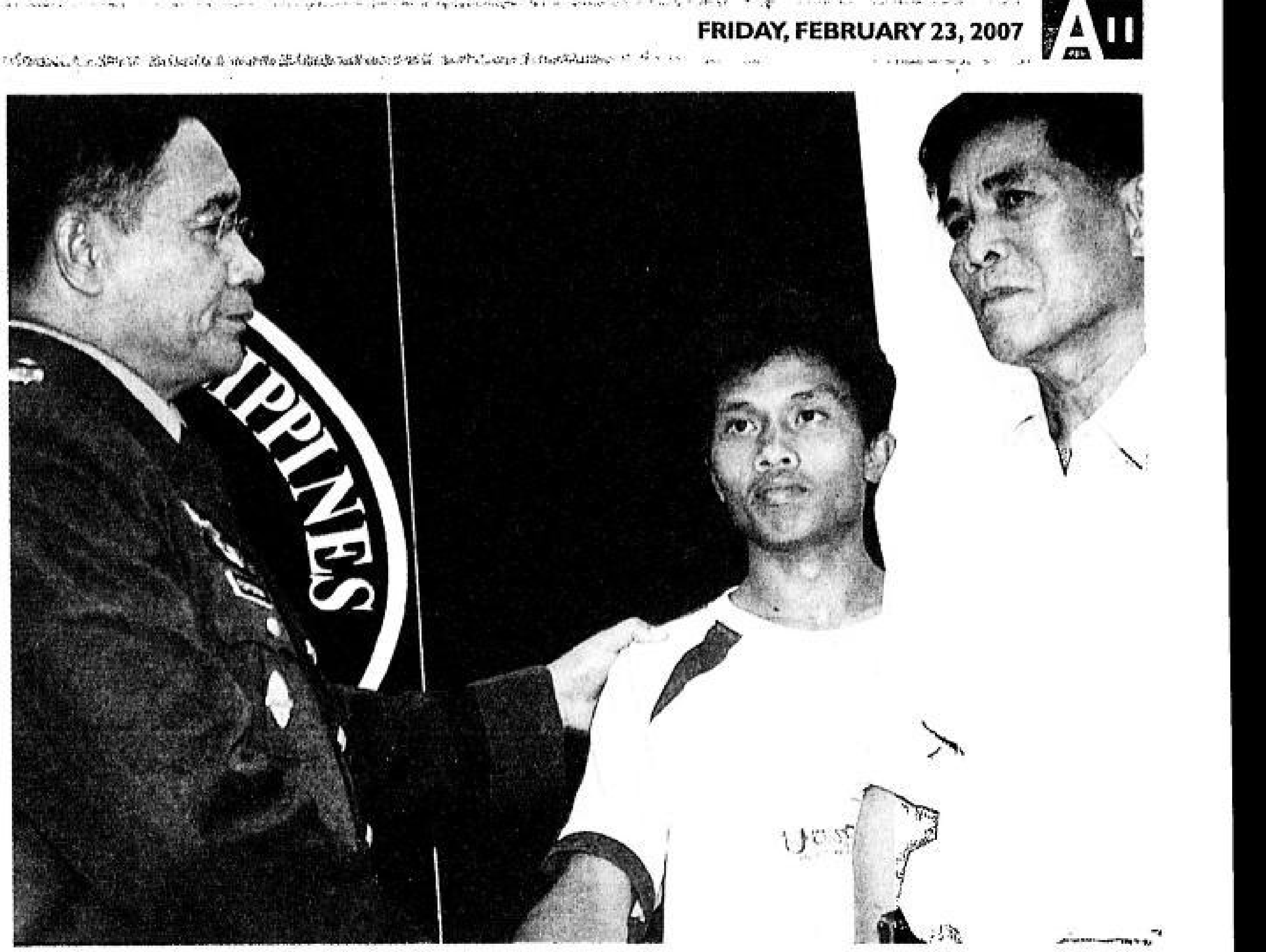
Mix of legal and illegal

Asked by a certain B. Deckers if "they are waging the struggle as well on the legal level and the illegal level," Sison said:

"Yes. Various forms of national democratic organizations wage various forms of struggle. There are two [which] are engaged in the armed revolution.

"Examples would be the CPP, the NPA and the NDF."

He said a combination of legal and armed struggles was "the way Filipino revolutionaries conceived their strategy" to establish a Maoist state in the country.



THEY'RE ALIVE: Reports about the deaths of Edwin Mascarinas (center) and Renato Bugtong were exaggerated as AFP Chief of Staff General Esperon presents the two men alleged by Karapatan as victims of extrajudicial killings during a press conference at Camp Aguinaldo on Thursday.

JOAN BONDOC

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sentative of the UN on Human Rights, ncluded his 10-day political killings in n a preliminary as- d the military "re- almost total denial pond effectively and he significant num-

ndemnation

e for Akbayan was esult of the group's nnation of atrocities New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines. Bayan Muna is identified with the CPP.

In a dialogue with Alston last Tuesday, Akbayan Rep. Loreta Ann Rosales told the UN representative that the NPA had engaged in "terrorist activities" like the burning of civilian trucks.

Alston asked if Akbayan's position against the NPA was leaning toward that of the military's, which has blamed the communist rebels for the political killings.

Baraquel said that while Akbayan had been vocal against the NPA, it also "condemned to the strongest degree" the alleged abuses of the military.

"Akbayan has always upheld the universality of human rights and human dignity. We condemn abuses whether committed by the state or by armed groups like the NPA," she said.

Disqualification

The conflict between Bayan Muna and Akbayan has worsened with the filing of a disqualification case against Bayan Muna Representatives Satur Ocampo and Teodoro Casiño in the party-list election in May. (*See related story on Page A2*).

The case was based on criminal charges filed against the two for allegedly ordering the killing of an Akbayan member.

Bayan Muna yesterday asked the Commission on Elections to junk the petition, saying it was the handiwork of "Malacañang and military and police officials, using alleged Akbayan members, to discredit and demolish" the group.

Baraquel yesterday denied that the disqualification case was "sanctioned or ordered by Akbayan."

Despite the differences, both groups agreed that the government should act immediately on Alston's recommendations.

"An independent and impartial probe has been undertaken ... and the major finding is that soldiers were behind the many slays. The next logical step is to order the military to put a stop to this madness," said Ocampo.

"It should lead to a credible inquiry on extrajudicial killings," Baraquel said.

Christian V. Esguerra

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ked nursing tests

greed in principle on the retake. d earlier ruled out any formal ap- by the Philippine government.

on said the retake would "not have ing to do with the license issue."

e labor department [will be in- d] because the reexamination is urposes of enhancing employabili- t licensing," he said, adding that censes earlier issued to the exam rs by the Professional Regulation mission would remain valid.

to be waived

the executive order drafted by , the Board of Nursing will con- Tests III (medical surgical nursing) V (psychiatric nursing) using the administrative processes.

the board that will prepare the tests, the papers, and issue the results.

e draft order also proposes that 600 fee for the retake be waived, hat government assistance be ex- d to the examinees in finding suit- eview centers.

remains to be seen how the -CGFNS agreement will affect the s of PRC Chair Leonor Tripon o to launch a separate appeal with ommission, which Brion has de- d as unauthorized.

sero earlier said a delegation com- l of representatives of the PRC, Philippine Nursing Association exam passers would travel to lelphia in the United States on 6 to make a separate appeal.

said the delegation would pre- he decisions of the PRC and the of Appeals on the leak to convince GFNS that the integrity of the li- re exam had been preserved.

idea

e leak generated a scandal that hilippine nursing licensure exams stion and elicited calls for the res- on of Rosero, the President's per- dentist.

e 2006 exam passers were divided wo camps—those who demanded ike and those who rejected the

administration lawmaker, Iloilo anette Garin, warned yesterday that ssion to appeal the denial of VisaS- certificates to the 2006 passers be a bad idea and a waste of time.

ording to Garin, the Rosero-led will hardly make a dent because the S has its own standards to follow.

"I don't think it will pay attention to them," said Garin, who pushed last year for the inclusion of a P40-million allocation in the supplemental budget to cover a retake of the 2006 exam.

"The PRC should just admit that it made a mistake and allow a retake," the lawmaker, who is also a physician, told the INQUIRER.

"We all know that there was a mistake and it was never resolved. Still, we're insisting that we're right," she said.

Right move

But Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella, another administration congressman, is aggressively supporting the planned appeal.

Early this week, Puentevella said two immigration officials from the US Embassy had told him that the Rosero mission was the right move.

"They said the best [move] is to continue with the trip and meet ... with the officers of the CGFNS," he told reporters.

Puentevella has circulated a resolution "expressing the sentiment of the House of Representatives against the policy" of the CGFNS.

"Denying [the] group their VisaScreen based on alleged irregularities in the exam which reflect on competence is a miscarriage of justice as the VisaScreen is not a test of competence," the resolution read in part.

But Garin described the resolution as "embarrassing," saying it would only give the impression that the House was condoning an obvious mistake that had never been corrected.

"When the news about the leakage [first] came out, the PRC through the leadership of Chair Rosero tried to cover up the fraud," Garin said in a privilege speech.

Like a leech

She added: "It even insisted on conducting the investigation, and when it failed, it prematurely released the results of the exam. It so swiftly conducted an oath-taking of the board passers to overtake the action of the judicial branch.

"But despite all these blunders, incompetence and utter lack of respect for the rule of law, Rosero holds on to her position like a leech and even has the audacity to come out with statements relative to the CGFNS announcement that can further put in jeopardy the present status of the June 2006 board passers."

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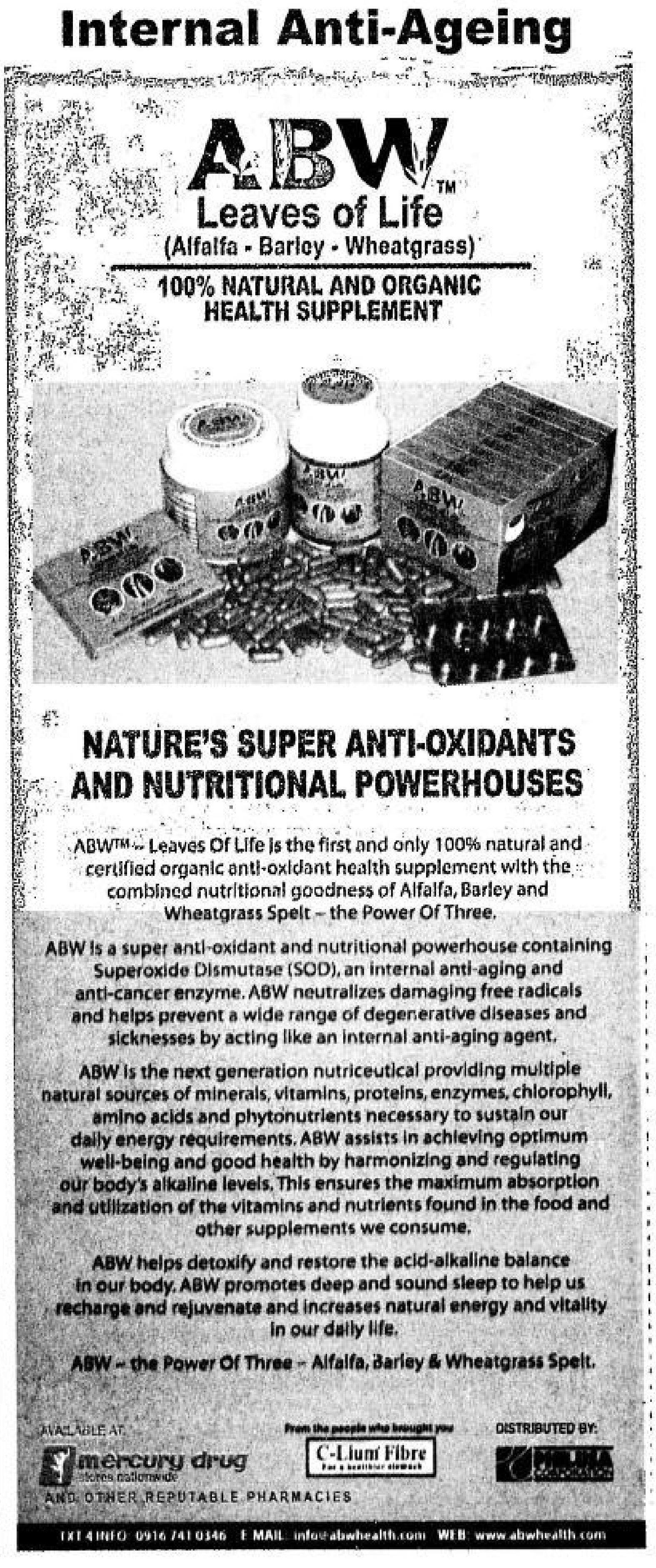

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Inconvenient truths

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENTS MACAPAGAL-ARROYO AND FIDEL V. Ramos laid a wreath at the Libingan ng mga Bayani to kick off the annual commemoration of the 1986 Edsa Revolution. They came and went without making any public statement, but then what could they have said?

They dared not recall what the people shouted at Edsa: "*Tama na, sobra na, palitan na!*" It would have reminded everyone how they were both parties to its repetition in 2001 and how they both tried to blunt similar calls since 2005. They could not pay tribute to those who gave blood, tears, toil and sweat to buck the odds and make the snap election an honest one. It would have served as a reminder that, conceited as he was, Ferdinand Marcos dared to mount a referendum, rigged or not, on his continuation in office; or that there was once a people, known as the Filipinos, who would not take a rigged election sitting down.

Too much water under the bridge, and this week is not a good time to remind anyone of the most cherished talking points of the Palace: everyone is the same, and since all politicians are obnoxious, better keep the incumbents where they are. That line was very much a Marcos favorite. It may work well enough the rest of the year, but not during the Edsa anniversary. Discretion, as the saying goes, is the better part of valor.

"*Tama na, sobra na, palitan na*" was an indictment of the culture of impunity, one in which all the regime's defects were everyone else's fault but its own: the communists', subversives', terrorists', the opposition's, but not the Marcoses' or their friends'. It was a referendum on human rights, a vote of confidence in public participation in vital political questions, however seemingly insurmountable the odds might be.

It came 21 years after Marcos was first given his chance to rule, and 15 years after he proclaimed he would do all the ruling himself. It came after his countrymen gave Marcos every possible benefit of the doubt, including turning a blind eye to his imprisoning and murdering anyone who dared question his solutions to everything. Edsa happened because Filipinos at the time came to realize that while they had been happy to give up some freedoms in order to move the country forward, no country ever ends up moving forward when its freedoms disappear.

The seeds of Edsa were planted in the rigged Batasan elections of 1978. They were watered with the blood of Ninoy Aquino and others previously considered "noisy" or "divisive," or "devoid of solutions or an alternative." Filipinos had to learn the hard way that absolute power carries with it an absolute guarantee that any gains will end up reversed.

Today, when observers speak of "People Power fatigue," they are seduced by an essentially meaningless, if catchy, phrase. It might be more accurate to say that collective action in terms of the "parliament of the streets" has evolved into many kinds of collective action. Gawad Kalinga, for example, is how Couples for Christ, which was present in the streets at Edsa II, channeled its energies into activities more difficult for politicians to subvert and less liable to disappoint its participants.

But while the mass actions of the past couple of years lack the colossal scale of 1986 (and people power in Eastern Europe), they remain comparable to 2001. Indeed, in any other country, protests on a Philippine scale would be politically disastrous for the administration. Witness protests in Europe or Thailand, where 10,000 to 40,000 people on the streets at any given time become cause for concern. We have, perhaps, simply become jaded over time. Our government has also become less willing to continue permitting what we once assumed was part of our democratic rights.

No one said that the defeat of the Philippine Revolution meant that perhaps Filipinos should never have aspired to be free. The cycle of cronyism and corruption that has replaced one administration with another shouldn't invalidate the aspirations that keep a society trying to demand accountability.

It took foreign concern over human rights violations for Marcos to even make token attempts to rein in his death squads. We see the same give-and-take today. Is it any wonder then that these and many other similarities to what came before have embarrassed our government into silence when confronted by the achievements of 1986?

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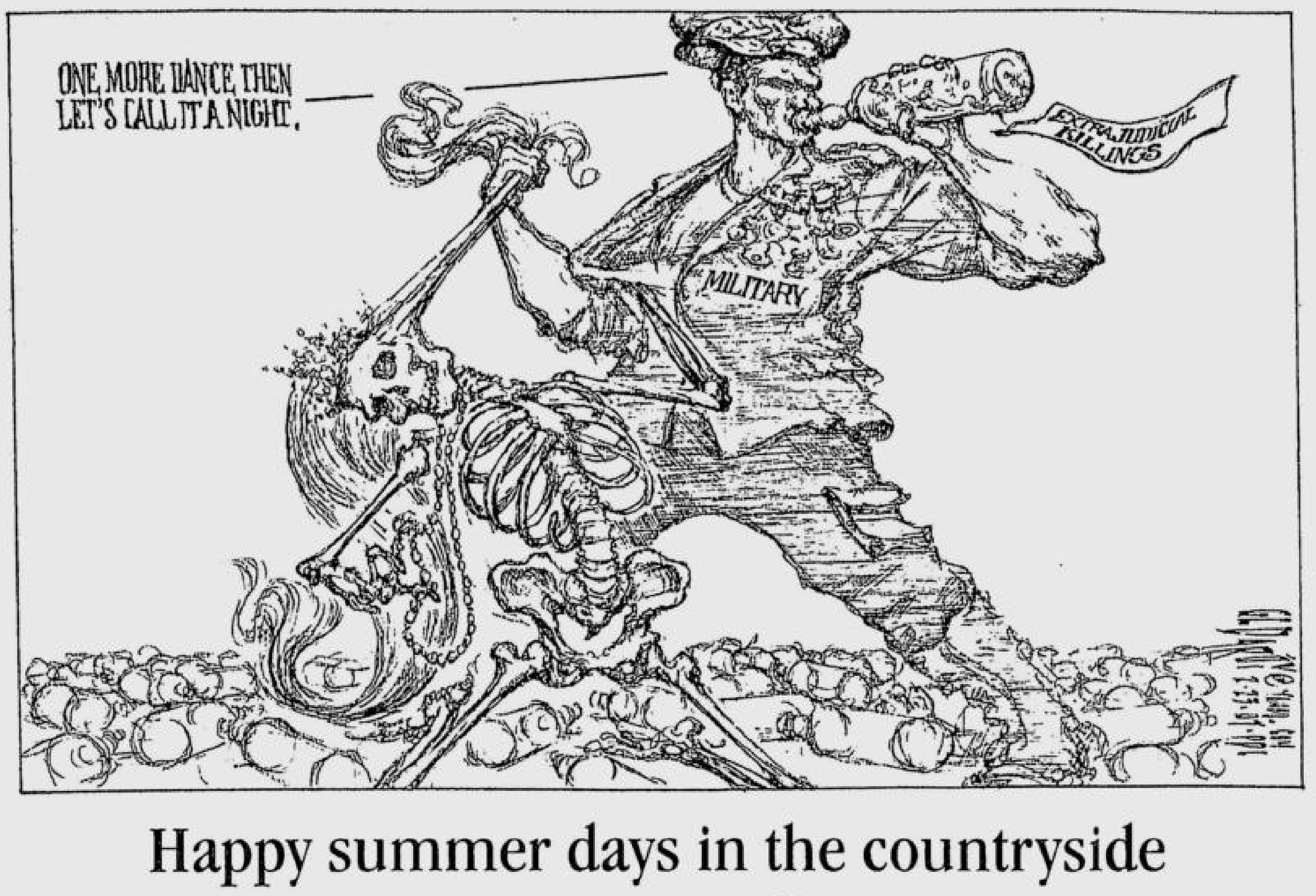

ONE MORE DANCE THEN LET'S CALL IT A NIGHT.
EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS
MILITARY

Happy summer days in the countryside

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE WEATHER bureau that summer is here and that the cool mornings will be replaced by hot days set me to reminiscing about my boyhood summers, first, among the fishponds of Malabon, and later, in inland barrios in Tarlac, across the wide river from the highway.

I wake up early in the morning and find the sun shining brightly like it is really summer. I walk out into the garden and feel the sun pleasantly hot on my skin. It felt the same way I felt many years ago when I ran across the dikes of fishponds and across wide fields planted to sweet potatoes, eggplants and tomatoes.

For city folks today, staying out in the hot sun is uncomfortable. After a few minutes under the noonday sun, they scurry for the shade of trees and buildings.

But for boys growing up in the rural areas, the hot sun is nothing. They can stay under the sun for hours and they do not get sunburned.

I remember that I used to play in the river the whole morning, way past lunchtime to early afternoon when the tide flowed back into the sea and left the river shallow. That was the time we would feel hungry and go home to eat. And that was the reason all the boys in our barrio were dark-skinned.

In Malabon, crisscrossed by two rivers and their tributaries that fed the fishponds with the life-giving water from the sea, the rivers were playgrounds. With the river at their doorstep, children, boys and girls learned to swim almost as soon as they learned to walk. Children also learned early how to make fishing poles and catch fish. Every house had two or three fishing poles under the stairs, besides spears and bamboo fish traps.

Catching fish was not a means of livelihood; it was a game. I remember one of our favorite games was a picnic. The girls would gather camote tops and other vegetables, and the boys would catch the fish. Others would climb the tamarind trees to gather the brown sour fruits for the *sinigang*. Everybody would chip in a little rice. The girls would prepare the fish and cook them with the vegetables and the rice. We would eat with our hands from banana fronds laid out on the ground, and I tell you they were the best-tasting food I ever tasted. For me, not even the best dishes from the best hotels could taste better, even now.

It was not only eating the fish that was fun but catching them. The small, thumb-size fish called *biya* were voracious eaters. No sooner had you lowered your bait into the water than one would get it. You jerk the tip of the fishing pole and you would have a fish wriggling at the end of the line. We put them in gallon cans or pails half-filled with water so they would stay fresh.

When *tilapia* was introduced in the fishponds, we would dig for earthworms and use them as bait. We had to use longer fishing poles because the *tilapia* stayed in the middle of the ponds.

We would move along the dikes, following the fish. Even now I can hear the lapping of the tiny waves along the banks and smell the salty air. Red dragonflies hovered over the water. Smaller blue and yellow dragonflies perched on the tips of grasses growing on the banks. Brown grasshoppers jumped ahead as you walked through the grass. Bees buzzed everywhere. Now and then, a kingfisher would dive from a tree into the water and fly off with a fish in its long beak. Sometimes a hawk would be flying round and round overhead, looking for prey. And over everything, there was always the sun, so bright you have to squint to see clearly, and yet only pleasantly hot to the skin.

After the fishponds, there was the river. During low tide, we would cruise close to the riverbanks in a banca with our slingshots and a lot of pebbles. The red crabs would be out among the roots of the mangrove trees. While the crabs sunned themselves outside their holes, we would take potshots at them with our slingshots. About one in five shots found their mark.

In the shallows among the mangrove roots, mudfish and other fish would be hiding. A three-pronged spear usually got them. At other times, there was the bamboo *salakab*. This was a cylindrical trap with a hole at the top. You dropped it into the water where you think there was fish, then put your hand through the hole and grabbed for the fish trapped inside.

That was life among the fishponds and the river.

Out in the fields of Tarlac, it was different. What was fun was taking the carabaos out to pasture and later taking them for a swim in the irrigation dikes. *Kangkong* grew profusely in the water and we would gather some to take home. On the way home through miles and miles of fields, we would break off some sugarcane and munch them. When we passed a *camote* patch, we would get down the backs of the carabaos and gather some *camote* tops. And when we passed a field of tomatoes and eggplants where some of the fruits were overripe and seemed ready to fall and be wasted, we would pick them and take them home.

Sometimes, we would take the carabaos to the wide but shallow river bordering MacArthur Highway. The riverbed was sandy and the water was warm in the sun and it was pleasant to just soak in the warm water beside the carabaos. Schools of billed fish swam in the shallow waters and most of the time there would be women washing clothes while their children played in the water beside them.

Camachile trees grew on the sandy banks of the river and in summer they would be heavy with fruits.

Ah, those were the happy days of summer.

Pharmaceutical Goliaths

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

MEDICINES ARE SOLD AT MUCH HIGHER prices in the Philippines than in other Third World countries—that much I knew. But I was truly shocked when I finally saw the numbers.

According to government figures issued by the Philippine International Trading Corp., Pfizer sells each Ponstan 500 mg tablet at P21 in the Philippines, compared to a mere P2.61 in India and P1.38 in Pakistan. Glaxo sells the asthma inhaler Ventolin 100 mcg at P315 to Filipinos, while Indians buy it at less than one-half that price, P123, and Pakistanis at less than one-fourth, P62. Indeed, rather more urgently, the diarrhea tablet Imodium is sold by Jansenn at P10 in Manila, while it sells at P3 in India and a mere P1.83 in Pakistan. (The figures may have slightly changed; I am relying on a May 2006 report by the PITC head, Roberto Pagdanganan. The peso has strengthened since then, and perhaps the pharmaceutical giants may have since acquired a conscience.)

Locally, the most controversial is the anti-hypertension drug Norvasc, manufactured by Pfizer, and properly so. It is, I understand, a maintenance drug that patients take over the long-term and not just episodically, and in a country where heart ailments are the leading cause of death.

In the Philippines, Norvasc is sold at P45 per 5 mg tablet and P75 per 10 mg tablet. Contrast that to the prices in India (P5 and P9, respectively) and Thailand (P26.65 and P45.65, respectively). At best, the Manila prices are twice what they are in neighboring Bangkok. In the Philippines alone, Pfizer generates approximately P1.2 billion ($60 million) in sales yearly on Norvasc.

That should be reason enough, don't you think, for their lobbyists to pass a note to a congressman, saying "We desperately need someone to question the quorum now. Can you do it?"

I am not dismayed at the brazen lobbying and parliamentary maneuvering; that is par for the course, whatever the cause, whatever the banner, you carry. It is the unjustness of the cause that I question, the spotted banner that I decry.

First off, what is at issue is not solely a private claim of title to property, that is to say, the pharmaceuticals' claim over their patents. Rather the issue is to what extent the Philippine legal system will protect those rights, given the countervailing needs of millions of Filipinos.

The pharmaceutical companies claim that drugs are expensive because they need to recover their investments in research and development. Indeed, this is the only moral ground by which they can claim protection for their patents. In 2001, the drug companies placed this at $802 million for each new drug they bring to the market. Yet the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) has placed the cost at $100 million after taxes, a fraction of the claimed amount. (The balance of $702 million, I suspect, goes to the med reps and the fancy doctors' conventions!) Even given those built-in costs, the logic of the market says that if their R&D costs can bear their India pricing at P5 per 5 mg tablet, how can they price it at 9 times more in the Philippines?

Moreover, new legal approaches to property law teach us that property is not the "thing" itself, but rather the "bundle of rights" protected by law, that is to say, the rights that we as a nation decide to shelter under our communal protection, e.g., the right to possess, to use, to exclude others, to sell, or even to destroy.

The Senate and House bills will give Filipinos better access to affordable medicines by allowing Filipinos to purchase cheaper but patented versions of the same drugs from, say, India. The Indian and Philippine patents remain unimpaired. The bills deal only with the right to sell. Right now, the pharmaceuticals claim an exclusive right to sell their products in the Philippines, and at bloated prices.

What the bills propose is to allow "parallel importation" so that if Pfizer sells it nine times cheaper in India, we can buy it from India and resell it locally. That way, the pharmaceuticals continue to sell at whatever price they desire, in New Delhi and in Manila, except that if they themselves sell cheaply in Delhi and dearly in Manila, Filipinos should be free to shop for a better bargain.

Indeed, look at the "bundle of rights" notion the other way: Isn't it foolish to use Philippine law to stop Filipinos from buying the same patented drug at lower prices elsewhere?

The reform bills before the Senate and the House are the indispensable first step in promoting the human right to health. The Philippine pharmaceutical market is placed at P100 billion per year, with Metro Manila alone accounting for a whopping 46 percent. Government estimates show that we have probably the highest drug prices in the world in relation to per capita income (in normal-people-speak, we pay more of our little income than richer folk).

The next steps, however, will have to be taken by the mass of Filipinos themselves, patients and doctors alike, who have to wean themselves away from brand names. We have had a Generics Law since the late 1980s, and yet generics account for a mere 3 percent of drugs in the Philippines, compared to over 50 percent in the United States. Filipinos go for branded drugs 97 percent of the time, and 70 percent of all purchases are with transnationals.

Without meaning to take the wind out of the sails of antipharmaceutical Davids, I write this as a true believer in traditional medicine, who swears by *pito-pito*, who brought his kids to *hilots* when they had *pilay*, and who sent his driver to find therapeutic leaves in some Quezon City swamps.

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

Edsa fatigue: a revisionist view

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THIS WEEK, FILIPINOS MARK THE 21ST ANniversary of the first People Power Revolution that was sparked by the military mutiny led by then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Lt. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos against the Marcos regime. After just two decades, the fervor for public celebration of that historic turning point has waned considerably. There is today a palpable lack of enthusiasm for commemorating it, in contrast, for example, to the enduring memorial rites for Armistice Day, marking the end of hostilities of World War I on Nov. 11, 1918.

The Filipinos' fatigue over Edsa is underlined by the fact that the Arroyo administration has not come up with a theme for the celebration, except for a military alert "to thwart any plan to disrupt the celebration by any group." The alert has become a ritualized police knee-jerk response to past Edsa celebrations. It has called attention to the fact that over the past six years, the administration has not known peace and has been rocked by political instability that required the call-up of the armed services to shore up the tottering regime.

The alert also recalls the bad memory of numerous coup attempts against elected governments since 1986. It reminds us that the threat of coups as an extra-legal means to change government is far from over. While People Power I left the legacy of restoring democracy, it also laid the ground for spawning military coup attempts, driven by the perspective that it was the Camp Aguinaldo mutiny that was responsible for the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship. Democratic restoration did not buy political stability. People Power degenerated into another extra-legal means to overthrow the government.

This Camp Aguinaldo perspective, still firmly held by Enrile and shared by many in the military, rejects the view that it was People Power that deposed Marcos and that Edsa I robbed the military of its right to take power. This issue continues to fuel the Edsa debate. It has driven military interventionism, which feeds on the failings of post-Edsa civilian governments and on the belief that the military, as the guarantor of security of the state, has a right to intervene to save it from its enemies.

While the debate rages over these conflicting perspectives, Filipinos are increasingly asking what is being celebrated at Edsa. They are asking where the country stands in terms of economic prosperity and political liberties 21 years after People Power I, which essentially was a blow for liberty, and not for social equity.

In regard to democratic results, it is still fresh in Filipino memories that only a year ago on Feb. 25, President Macapagal-Arroyo declared a state of national emergency in response to a quashed coup attempt, which the administration defined as a "conspiracy" among rebellious military groups and its political opponents. Since then, the political orientation of Philippine democracy has increasingly shifted toward the reinforcement of a national security state, underpinned by the deeper involvement of the military and police in affairs of state in support of policies directed at crushing the long-standing communist insurgency and combating terrorism that is externally based and directed.

In line with these policies, the government has tried to put in place a framework of legislation that seeks to curtail individual liberties. For example, the antiterrorism bill, which is awaiting the President's signature to become law, seeks to establish draconian measures to combat terrorism associated with Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida and its Asian networks. The harsh punitive measures of the bill for vaguely defined "terrorist acts" have been criticized by human rights groups as a severe curtailment of political rights.

The administration pushed the bill in Congress as part of a "commitment to the international community" in the campaign against Islamist terrorists who had bombed the World Trade Center in New York.

The overriding theme of the political agenda a year after the proclamation of national emergency and 21 years after Edsa I is about terror, violence and curtailment of human rights, showing how far we have moved from the goals of Edsa. The agenda is marred by the issue over the extrajudicial killings in the country highlighted by the Melo Commission report.

These developments have led the country further away from the libertarian vision of Edsa I, with political authority becoming less democratic since then. The drift toward the Right has raised questions over whether the Edsa spirit has become a spent political force. Edsa has disappointed Filipino expectations as a movement promoting enhancement of their political liberties.

The 21st anniversary is an occasion for reflection rather than a celebration of an event which many Filipinos no longer find relevant. The authoritarian turn of the democratic polity restored by Edsa I collides with the Edsa dream and sets back democratization. Edsa as a movement establishing a democratic foundation, from which to promote economic growth, has been a huge disappointment. As an agent of social reform and redistribution of wealth, Edsa has proved to be a dismal failure.

As a beneficiary of Edsa, the Arroyo administration has betrayed its democratic legacy. It is not even delivering impressive economic results as a tradeoff for the erosion of Edsa's democratic heritage. This is the reason Filipinos have become apathetic to Edsa celebrations.

Edsa has become a national yawn.

Migrants' manifesto

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FROM SOME FRIENDS COMES THIS "Migrants' Manifesto" that a group of Filipinos overseas has prepared in time for the coming elections. The manifesto, presented in a PowerPoint format, calls on all overseas Filipinos to use their numbers and influence to initiate real change in the Philippines by forging an agenda that candidates could adopt for better governance.

"With already 10 percent of the country's 80 million citizens supporting families back home, there is both an opportunity and a challenge for migrants and overseas workers to effectively exercise this political clout towards influencing public policy back home and ultimately in shaping the national development agenda," the manifesto states.

Last year, remittances reached $14 billion based on official records, equivalent to almost 15 percent of GDP, with the money sent home supporting at least 16 to 20 million families. "This could fuel economic growth and fight poverty if properly harnessed. For this reason, we are compelled to exercise our right to…seek solidarity of all concerned citizens to support our advocacy," the manifesto states.

In their preamble, the migrant groups state that: "We, the overseas Filipinos worldwide, urge each and everyone in the coming May electoral contest to implore all political parties, emerging parties and their respective candidates to bring forth a platform based campaign so that the electorate can choose credible persons who are worthy to lead the nation."

* * *

IN THEIR analysis, the "root causes of human insecurity and threats to overall peace and development" can be traced to the following:

- **Conditions of inequity, with an elite few controlling power and economic resources;**
- **Abject poverty;**
- **Poor governance;**
- **Injustice, abuse of authority and violations of human rights; and**
- **Marginalization of minority groups.**

Despite these many problems, though, the **Philippines has seen "squandering of billions of pesos from legitimate and illegitimate sources," which the migrants say "had been a common scenario in a personality- and patronage-based electoral contest in the Philippines."**

The manifesto thus proposes a platform-based campaign that would, first of all, sustain poverty-reduction efforts by ensuring equitable growth, and then ensuring that "poor people have political power," that is, giving them "a real voice and space."

Part of the process of creating a new platform-based politics is holding accountable "the powerful and/or the elites, whether political leaders, corporation or other influential actors" for their "actions, (and) their success or failure in (carrying out) their individual or party platforms that promise good governance."

* * *

"WE challenge those who want to become legitimate servants and leaders to articulate a concrete and doable developmental plan aimed at the Filipino migrant workers around the world," the manifesto adds. "We pledge to support legitimate servants of the people running for any public position that aggressively promote the interests of our sector."

Among the details of the migrants' platform:

- Institute meaningful comprehensive electoral reforms starting with the removal of the residency requirement from the Absentee Voting Law. Introduce laws that will create transparency (in) campaign expenditures, (including) verifiable financial sources, imposing a limit on individual, group and corporate campaign donations.
- Create an office with a Cabinet status such as a Department of Migration and Development that will truly work for the interests of migrant workers. Set up an advisory board composed of qualified, dedicated and credible overseas Filipinos to advice the department.

How can overseas Filipinos take part in this campaign? The manifesto suggests that those interested sign the online petition at http://www.PetitionOnline.com/OFWMan/ "if you are convinced of the Migrants' Manifesto"; forward the online petition, the PowerPoint presentation and the OFW Blogspot at http://filipinosworldwide.blogspot.com/ to your concerned friends, colleagues and extensive networks across the globe; and send your comments and/or suggestions to ofwmanifestor@yahoo.com to ensure a continuous enrichment process.

"Let's enable the citizenry, including eligible overseas voters and members of their families in the Philippines to make informed decisions," the manifesto declares.

"Let's ensure that only those candidates with clear and sincere intentions of promoting the welfare of the migrant sector, their families, and millions of poor people in our country are elected to public office!"

* * *

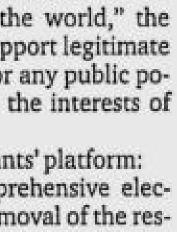
THE MIRIAM College Entrepreneurship Department is holding its Entrepreneurial Practicum Fair from Feb. 22 to March 22 at Level 1, East Wing, Robinson's Galleria.

Participants are second- and third-year college students who aspire to be successful entrepreneurs. The practicum provides an opportunity for students to realize their potentials by manufacturing their own products, including women's accessories, home-made ice cream and other delicious food items, and selling them to the public.

Everyone is asked to support these aspiring entrepreneurs!

A course on food

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

SEASONED PROFESSORS USUALLY ADVISE the young and inexperienced that if they truly want to learn something new and learn it well, they should teach it. This process forces you to do focused research on a given topic and to work out its clear and organized presentation to an interested audience. Teaching the Rizal course, as I do every semester, means I review my old material, search for new ones and, more importantly, go over the comments and reactions of students the semester before, if only to see how much I have learned from them.

This semester, I'm teaching two undergraduate sophomore classes for the first time because my course is usually reserved for juniors and seniors. I am pleasantly surprised by my students' answers to my questions. They rarely hit the mark on the first try, but the range of answers, even the most pointless or absurd, reveals sparks of thought going on inside the sea of heads before me. My students remind me of the audacity of my youth that I have since lost.

The encounter with young people is probably what keeps many teachers young and alert. The pay may not compare with those in other professions, but the rewards of teaching are infinitely better than expensive creams and treatments. Teaching is the fountain of youth.

Encouraged by the interaction with my students this semester, I am considering teaching a new course next year, something that would explore the relationship between food and history. How can we have history without food, or, better still, food without history?

The catalogues of foreign universities boast of numerous courses on food, ranging from practical courses for people who want to become chefs or restaurateurs to more specialized ones on food in art, music, poetry, etc. Courses on food are easy to teach in the West because they have much published research. They have the basic readings available, from cookbooks to very obscure specialized journals like Petits Propos Culinaires, which I discovered when Doreen Fernandez and I were invited to submit our essays on 19th-century Sulipan, which appeared as "Grande Cuisine in the Philippines." In the same issue were articles like "The origin of French fries" by Karen Hess and "A modern history of British eggs" by Martin Orbach.

In the Philippines, food literature is growing. I have been told that next to Bibles and other titles of the "inspirational" or "self-help" variety, people are buying books on food. We have the staples, the Philippine cookbooks by Enriqueta David Perez and Nora Daza that trained generations of Filipinos on what we call *lutong bahay.* But it is significant that newly released cookbooks are not just recipe books but also attempts at memory and nostalgia, the most beautifully designed being "Memories of Philippine Kitchens" by Amy Besa and Romy Dorotan who run Cendrillon restaurant in New York.

We have Erlinda Enriquez Panlilio who compiled essays not on comfort women or comfort rooms but "Comfort Food." Then there is the wonderful "Governor General's Kitchen" by Felice P. Santa Maria, which is filled with all sorts of historical references and illustrations on Philippine food, a gold mine for research.

For something that is so essential—or should we say vital—to life, food is invisible and rather difficult to find in history. Aside from the books, monographs and articles of the late Doreen G. Fernandez and that remarkable pioneering volume "Culinary Culture of the Philippines" assembled by Gilda Cordero Fernando in the last century, most of the materials on our food history lie unprocessed in cookbooks. Historians interested in food like myself have to pursue stray references to food and eating in early travelers' accounts of the Philippines and the Filipinos over the centuries.

We have the first references to food in Antonio Pigafetta's account of the Magellan expedition in 1521 and, of course, there is much more tucked away in the various dictionaries compiled of Philippine languages from the 17th to 19th centuries.

Fortunately, things are changing for the better. A number of books on Philippine food have seen print in recent years, many of them going a step beyond recipes into memory and a search for that elusive thing we call national identity. One of the latest additions to this fast-growing literature is Claude S. Tayag's first book, "Food Trip," which takes us on his food trips both in the Philippines and abroad. The book makes the task of a historian of the 21st century easier because we have in Tayag not just a good cook, but the visual and gustatory imagination of an artist.

Tayag and I were fortunate to have enjoyed the company and mentorship of the late E. Aguilar Cruz, who shared our passion for food, be it the ritzy fine-dining of a specialty hotel restaurant or a rinky-dink, greasy-spoon *carinderia.* We started with eating and the pleasure it brought. Gilda Cordero Fernando made us see all this in relation to Philippine culture, and Doreen Fernandez gave us a scholar's eye for research into food before our time.

I think I'm ready to teach a course on Philippine food that will hopefully provide explorations for the palate as well as reflections on the relationship between food and history, food and Philippine culture.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Victory

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

CONGRESS' SPECIAL SESSION HAS PRODUCED MIXED results. On the dark side, the lawmakers rammed through an antiterrorism bill which threatens many of our civil liberties. On the bright side, the House of Representatives approved the Cheaper Medicine Act of 2007, which will now have to be reconciled with the Senate version passed earlier.

The bill faced strong opposition from the drug industry, all the way up to the last day of deliberation. Lobbyists from the Pharmaceutical and Health Care Association of the Philippines (PHAP) were asked to leave the plenary hall where Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin and other legislators were deliberating on the bill. The lobbyists had slipped a note to Locsin asking him to question the quorum and to call PHAP's chief executive officer, Leo Wassmer. Locsin and the legislators saw this as undue interference, as well as corporate arrogance. PHAP has responded by saying they were only appealing to Locsin as their representative (PHAP is based in Makati).

But PHAP has not been known for its sense of good etiquette; on the contrary, it is notorious for bullying people. I still remember that when it was still the Drug Association of the Philippines, it threatened and cajoled officials of the Department of Health, including Dr. Alfredo Bengzon, when they tried to get the Generics Act passed. In recent months, it has fought with the DOH while trying to block new Implementing Rules and Regulations for the Breastfeeding Code.

Advocates will now have to keep a close watch as the bicameral committee puts together a final version of the Cheaper Medicines Act. Meanwhile, we should be educating ourselves on the new law's two main provisions.

Provisions

First, they will allow the government to go into compulsory licensing of certain medicines when it is in the interest of public health. For example, if avian flu breaks out, the government may require the manufacturers of Tamiflu to allow other companies to begin producing it at lower cost, possibly under its generic name oseltamivir. Under the present system, the drug can only be produced by the patent holder, who can then dictate a high price.

This system of compulsory licensing is already being used in other countries. In January, the Thai government announced the compulsory licensing of two drugs: Kaletra for HIV/AIDS and Plavix for heart disease. Last November, the Thais also issued a compulsory license to import and produce generic versions of the anti-AIDS drug Efavirenz.

The Cheaper Medicines Act has a second important provision: It safeguards parallel imports. This means bringing in the same brand-name product from the same multinational company's subsidiary in another country. Confused? The multinationals will charge different prices for the same product, depending on which country they're in. Quite often, the Thai and Indian subsidiaries charge lower prices, for reasons I'm going to explain later. So, instead of buying from the local subsidiary of multinational X, they could go to its branch in India and bring in the same medicine at a lower cost.

The multinationals have tried to use the courts to block these parallel imports so legislation was intended to protect the government from further harassment. "Unfair!" the multinationals scream, but really, isn't competition what capitalism is all about?

It is not a coincidence that India and, lately, Thailand are becoming sources of low-cost but good quality medicines. The two countries wisely chose, many years ago, to forego their accession to the international patent system because they felt it was unfair to developing countries. India was known for its system which recognized product patents but not process patents, meaning if a company found a way to manufacture the same medicine as a patent holder, but using a different process, it could go ahead and produce it. Through the years, India developed a national drug industry, mainly private companies, that put up stiff competition to the multinationals.

Thailand pursued a similar track, with both government and private drug companies turning out low-cost medicines. This forced multinationals to lower their drug prices. That is why the multinationals' branded products are often cheaper than the same medicines sold here in the Philippines.

And the Philippines? Last time I checked, multinationals accounted for about 70 percent of drug sales in the country. The market is segmented, often with two or three multinationals cornering the sales for particular product lines, for example, contraceptives. The only serious local contender is the Unilab group of companies, which includes a number of subsidiaries such as Pediatrica, Medichem, Rite-Med. Together, these companies account for about 10 percent of total drug sales. Ironically, Unilab got its initial boost during the Marcos dictatorship as one of the crony companies. At one time, it had a 20-percent share of the market. But these days the Unilab group seems to be making up for its past "sins" by producing more affordable medicines.

Bluff

Let's face it though: Many medicines, even those of Unilab, are still often unaffordable even for the middle class and for people who suffer from chronic ailments that require daily medication.

The problem now will be implementing the act. I am sure the multinationals will resort to the courts, as well as an intensive mass media campaign, to block the act. I can predict that they will talk about the dangers of "counterfeit medicine," which is nonsense because parallel imports come from their own subsidiaries (unless they're saying their own companies are producing fake medicines).

They'll also threaten us, as they have before, about withdrawing from the Philippines. But they've gone through this bluff before and we have to realize they need us more than we do them. If they withdraw, there will be other sources for the medicines, often at much lower cost.

It's time the multinationals learn to play by local rules. When Thailand announced its plans for compulsory licensing recently, the drug companies protested. But when it became clear that the Thai government was not about to budge, one company lowered the price of its medicine.

The Cheaper Medicines Act does not mean we've won the war for more affordable medicines. The government has to seriously think about stimulating the local drug industry so we need not be very dependent on the multinationals. It's ridiculous that we now have two forms of medical tourism: on one hand, Westerners come to the Philippines to avail themselves of our cheaper medical services, yet Filipino tourists in Thailand or India now include drugstores in their shopping expeditions to get cheaper medicines.

The INQUIRER is a member of the
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Young girl preaching chastity

THIS REFERS TO THE YOUNGblood article titled "What's going on here?" (INQUIRER, 2/17/07)

I would like to congratulate Hannah Lyn C. Creencia for still believing in the time-honored values of holy purity and chastity. I also thank her parents for having brought her up very well. I am sure that there are many other young women who share her views and values. She belongs to the breed of principled young people that our country sorely needs—future leaders with strong moral fiber.

Certainly, kissing can be associated only with true love, in which mature people give themselves unconditionally to each other. On the other hand, the young should take their studies more seriously in preparation for a better life.

The sponsors of the "lovapalooza" event are irresponsibly sending the wrong signal to the young. They aim to land in the Guinness Book of World Records, but at what expense? They lead the young to act rashly—only to regret later. We cannot be blindly copying Western culture. Look at what's happening to Western countries now.

I hope the sponsors of "lovapalooza" can come up with nobler activities geared toward the youth's intellectual and spiritual development.

—CHING D. AUNARIO,
tag_makati@yahoo.com

Legislators worry-free on Epira's slow implementation

THE POWER SECTOR ASSETS and Liabilities Management Inc. (PSALM) recently awarded the 360-MW Magat Hydroplant to the SN Power and Aboitiz Power Corp. which made a bid of $530 million. This is the seventh and biggest hydroelectric power plant disposed of in the ongoing privatization of Napocor (National Power Corp.) assets.

Noticeably, the seven plants disposed of so far are all hydroelectric, the source of the cheapest electricity. Unlike other sources of electricity, hydro plants do not operate on fuels whose costs just suddenly shoot up. With a number of hydro plants already privatized and removed from the government-owned pool of power plants, the cost of Napocor power is set to go up in no time, while the distribution utilities get to enjoy the benefits of cheaper power from their own independent power producers (IPPs).

PSALM, mandated under Sec. 31 of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) to privatize 70 percent of Napocor's assets, must watch out to not compromise the rates offered by Napocor (our nation's biggest energy supplier, from where we source most of our electricity). Otherwise, power rates could become even more expensive, while private firms get all the advantages of operating the most profitable plants around. PSALM should see to it that Filipinos enjoy electric service at the cheapest cost possible.

The cost of electricity in the country is still the most expensive in Asia, second only to Japan; and, as far as our competitiveness in energy infrastructure is concerned, we rank 54th among 61 countries.

More than five years after its passage, Epira remains a testament of broken promises, failed objectives and political inconsistencies. The failure to properly implement Epira has, in fact, made the law the biggest stumbling block in the power industry's march toward retail competition and open access.

What makes the situation worse is that our legislators in the energy committees of the Senate and House of Representatives and in the Joint Congressional Power Commission (which is tasked to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Epira) do not seem to be bothered by the law's snail-paced implementation.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile has filed a bill to amend the Epira. Sadly, with elections just around the corner, the bill has practically been archived. There are lessons to be learned from the old Epira. Our legislators should heed them.

—PETE L. ILAGAN,
president,
National Association of Electricity
Consumers for Reforms Inc.,
10 Bayside Court Compound,
680 Quirino Avenue,
Tambo, Parañaque City

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Nurses being punished while cheats stay free

MAY I REACT TO THE NEWS report about the need for the June 2006 nursing board passers to retake and pass Test 3 and 5 of the Nursing Licensure Examination before they can be granted the VisaScreen certificate. (INQUIRER, 2/16/07)

Nurses, especially the June 2006 board passers, are again at the losing end, while the guilty parties are still free.

Instead of penalizing the culprits and addressing the brain drain issue, President Macapagal-Arroyo is moving heaven and earth to export our nurses abroad. It is all about dollar remittances to keep afloat the Philippine economy. The stain on the nursing profession in the Philippines remains because the culprits, the ones behind the test leakage, are yet to be penalized.

While the administration has been kicking out local executives belonging to the opposition, the government has never lifted a finger to penalize guilty parties in the nursing leakage fiasco. And to think that nurses and the nursing profession deal with life and death. Is political survival more important than the Filipino people's health and safety?

The officials of the US Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) are concerned about the quality of nursing service that the June 2006 board passers will be able to give to the American people—a far cry from this government which cares only about remittances, political favors and staying in office.

—JENNY MANUEL,
reyes_jenny021180@yahoo.com

ICC still reviews project proposals

THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO THE news item "Gov't warned against wasting ODA funds" (INQUIRER, 2/15/07), which reported that "future infrastructure project approvals would bypass the ICC."

The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) wishes to clarify that the interagency Investment Coordination Committee (ICC), which is under the Neda Board and the Cabinet, continues to review and recommend projects for the Neda Board's consideration.

The report quoted former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla as saying, "I was told that ICC review is no longer necessary and proponents can now go directly to the agencies."

Executive Order 230 (Reorganizing the Neda), which was issued on July 22, 1987, mandates the ICC to: (1) evaluate the fiscal, monetary and balance of payments implications of major national projects and recommend to the President the timetable of the implementation of these projects on a regular basis; and (2) recommend to the President a domestic and foreign borrowing program updated each year, and subsequently submit to the President a status of the fiscal, monetary and balance of payments implications of major national projects.

In carrying out this mandate, major national projects are submitted or proposed by government agencies to the ICC for review, under guidelines issued by the ICC.

A major national project is a public investment (including public-private partnership such as the build-operate-transfer scheme) that costs at least P500 million and is undertaken by the national government through its agencies and corporations.

The ICC is composed of the finance secretary as chair; the Neda director-general as co-chair; and the executive secretary, the secretaries of agriculture, trade and industry, energy, budget and management, and the governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas as members.

We hope this letter will clarify matters and set the record straight.

—ROLANDO G. TUNGPALAN,
assistant director general,
National Economic and
Development Authority,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

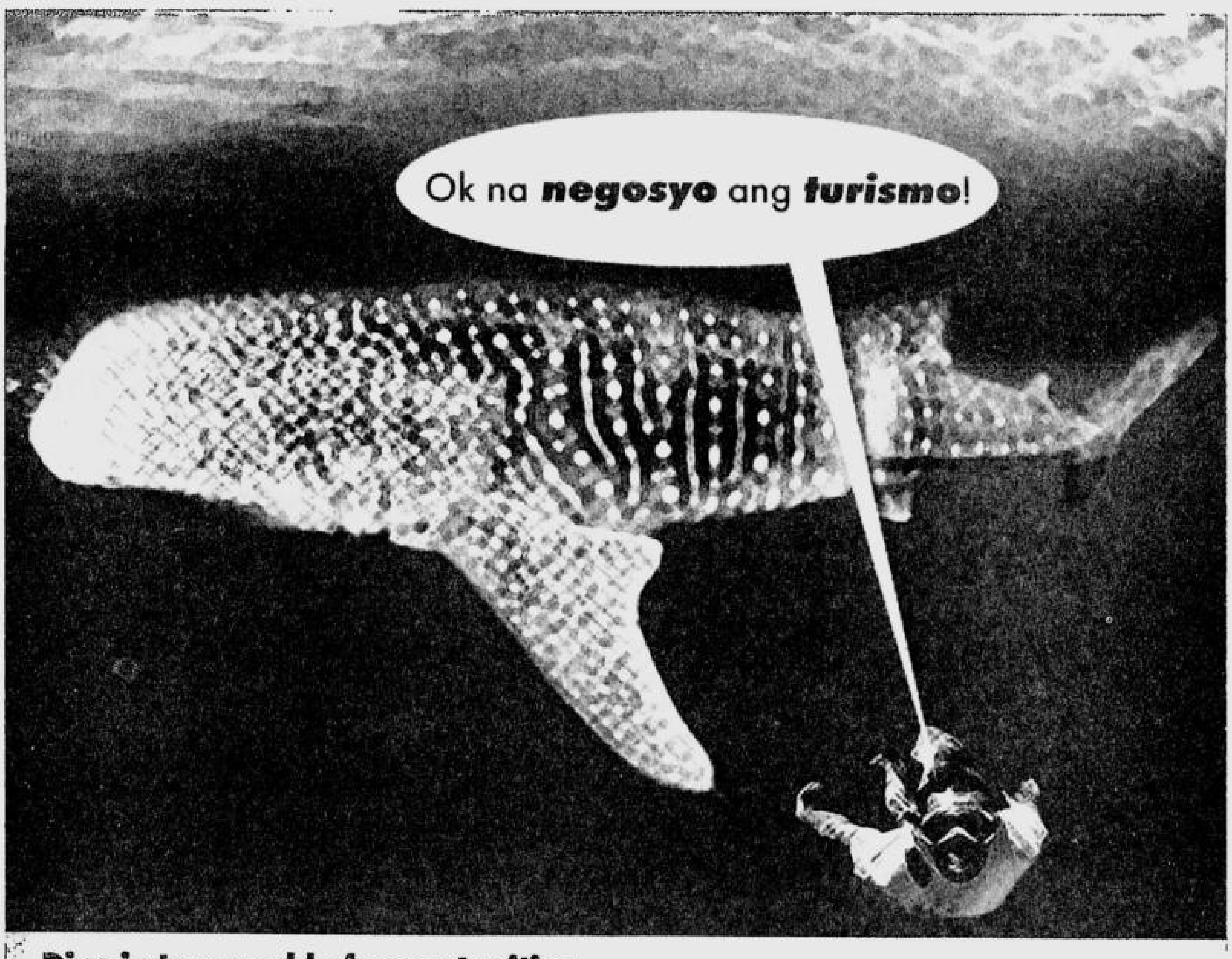
Drug busts no longer news

THIS IS NO LONGER NEWS. MILlions of pesos worth of shabu chemicals and paraphernalia confiscated. ("Police, NBI confiscate shabu chemicals ... Could be worth P6B when processed, says NBI," (INQUIRER, 2/17/07)

What would be news is if the persons behind the trafficking of shabu materials or the operation of shabu laboratories get caught. A much bigger news would be if their protectors are put behind bars. But as most of the police and NBI operations show, people in the illegal drug trade "naturally" outwit the law enforcers. There could be millions of reasons for this.

It seems also that top officials don't mind that it has become a pattern in big drug bust operations that no person is caught and only materials are seized. No wonder the Philippines is one of the biggest exporters of shabu in Asia.

—JAMES TANAKA,
tanakajd1980@yahoo.com



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Huwag kalimutan panoorin ang GoNegosyo tuwing Lunes sa RPN 9, 10:30-11:30 PM.

Day 1
March 2, 2007

1:30pm
FORUM 1: Transportation: The journey starts here
Speakers: Fe Agudo (Hyundai)*, Raulito Cayamanda (Association of Car Rental Companies)*, Feliz Cruz (Board of Airline Representatives)*, Avelino Zapanta (Ski Club of Manila), Albert Abuy (Philippine Association of Tourist Transport Operators), Clang Garcia* (Hop On Hop Off Tours), Philtranco, LTFRB
Moderator: Rhea Santos
Convenor: Pax Lapid

2:30pm
FORUM 2: Hospitality and Accommodations: The perfect place to stay
Speakers: Rose Libongco (President of Hotel Sales and Marketing Association)*, Teresita Pula (Rabulan Home Stay in Sorsogon)*, Dir. Ma. Victoria Jasmin (Tourism Standards)*, Patrick Gregorio (Microtel)*, Vicky Wallace (Bohol Bee Farm),
Moderator: Miriam Quiambao

3:30pm
FORUM 3: Food, Beverage and Eating: Truly Pinoy
Speakers: JM Tenedor (Bacolod Chicken Inasal)*, Chef Bernard Dua (Guava), Gaudencio Gardiola (Blue Gre Coffee), Laudette Dayrit (Le Cordon Bleu Manila), Antonio's Breakfast, Colette's Buko Pie, Eurobake, Shamrock, Longganisa Vigan, Bonoan Bangus
Moderator: Cory Quirino

4:30pm
SPECIAL FORUM 1: How To's Of Starting A Business
Speakers: Dr. Corazon Rodriguez (Asian Institute of Tourism)*, Ms. Lorraine Villanueva (Endeavor), Edgar Castillo (Microfinance), Mariaelle Trinidad (Center for Culinary Arts), Sec. Augusto Syjuco (TESDA), Dir. Rhodora Leano (DTI BSMED) DOT representative
Moderator: Nado Sanchez*

Day 2
March 3, 2007

1:00pm
FORUM 4: Tour Activities and Sightseeing: Leisure and pleasure at my fingertips
Speakers: Cathy Brillantes (Nature Spa)*, Amy Santos (Hanban)*, Salvador Adres (Davao Municipal Tourism)*, Jojo Clemente (PTAA)*, Gov. Lray Villafuerte (CamSur Water Sports Complex), Anton Carag (Chico River Adventure) Dir. Warner Andrada
Moderator: Drew Arellano
Convenor: Gov. Lray Villafuerte

2:15pm
FORUM 5: OTOP: Shop 'til you drop
Speakers: Tina Padilla Diego (Balikbayan)*, Jay Aldeguer (Islands Souvenirs)*, Narda Capuyan (Narda's)*, Alice Guerrero (Tesoro's), Lydia Lumiboo (Pik Nat / Emmanuel Panlilio), Ana Goldelara (Anafabel Enterprises)
Moderator: Ali Sotto
Convenor: DTI Usec. Carissa Cruz

3:15pm
FORUM 6: Marketing and Tourism: Niches, trends, promotions and more opportunities
Speakers: DOT Usec. Oscar Palabyab*, Dr. Daniel Corpus*, Marisa Nallana (PACEOS)*, Dr. Allen Canasal (National Ecotourism Steering Comm.), Dean Evelyn Pantig
Moderator: Cherry Mercado
Convenor: Hernan Narvadez

5:30pm
SPECIAL FORUM 2: Business Opportunities in the Tourism Industry and Its Impact on the Philippine Economy
Speakers: Lance Gokongwei, Henry Sy, Inspiring Awardees*

*To be confirmed.

Tourism Negosyo is presented by: Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship

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A culture of dishonesty

INQUIRER.NET VOICES

WE IN THE UNITED STATES are appalled by the 2006 nursing exam cheating scandal. We have all been hurt and shamed as Filipinos.

But after all that have transpired, few people have gotten the message that the CGFNS wants to teach them a lesson. No amount of appeals will change its decision to disallow this batch of nurses from working in the United States because to do so would compromise patient care in the United States.

What people should do is pressure the authorities to indict and jail the cheaters and all their accomplices. At this point, no one has even been charged.

Those who are innocent will have to bear the burden, too. They should raise hell over their fate. Everyone is paying a price for a culture of dishonesty.

An appeal will do no good; this is the United States, not the Philippines. There is no easy way out. **—Ted Alvarez, Woodside Avenue, New York (via e-mail)**

***

I was telling my friends about my worries on the future of nursing students/graduates back in the Philippines, as the substance of their training (and now their licensure exam) is being questioned. First of my worries is that nursing schools are popping up everywhere. X number of schools means X number of instructors and students requiring X number of hospitals for training. With the growing number of schools comes a growing need for competent instructors to train all these students. But how many of their present instructors have sufficient training and experience to teach?

Secondly, if other countries find out about the present predicament of the training system back home, they would not hesitate to stop hiring nurses from the Philippines. There are other countries that can supplement their supply of nurses.

People may say Filipino nurses are better than others, but until when can we keep saying this to ourselves if the basic training of future nurses is questionable?**—Anthony Zimbares Jr., Auckland, New Zealand (via e-mail)**

***

Overseas Filipino workers are considered "*bayani ng bayan*" and yet, when you go to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, you'll see how they are being treated. Just going to that very old building won't make anyone feel like a real hero. And there is the long queue one has to endure.**—Ariel Lopez, Georgia, USA (via e-mail)**

***

Joker Arroyo with GMA reminds me of the illustrious Arturo Tolentino with Ferdinand Marcos. Luminous talent, passion and integrity turned into abomination in the sunset of their lives.

Oh, how I admired Tolentino, and I still feel pain of the ignominy he suffered until he passed away.

Arroyo should reconsider while there is time. He would do the greatest service to the country and continue his unblemished record if he were to break out of the so-called "Team Unity" and run as an independent candidate. He has the capacity to give the Filipinos the kind of government they truly deserve.**—Jess Diaz, Sydney, Australia (via e-mail)**

***

Manny Pacquiao should concentrate on his boxing career first, and enter public service afterwards. One cannot serve two masters at the same time.

I am confident that his desire to serve the people is genuine, and that he will give his 100 percent to do so. But, if he runs for office now, he would be giving only 50 percent to public service, as the other 50 percent would be devoted to boxing, a lose-lose scenario, if you ask me.

Indeed, there is no law prohibiting him from running for office, but can he actually serve his constituents fully even when his career requires him to go overseas for long periods of time?

Manny, you are only 28. Finish your contract. Fight the big fight for us in the ring, and you can serve the people afterwards.**—Elmer Valeroso, Sampaloc, Manila (via e-mail)**

***

To Pacquiao:

Please, please, Manny, you have your place in the sun. *Gamiton ra ka sa mga hugaw nga politicos kay naa kay daghang kwarta* (You are being used by dirty politicians because you have lots of cash). There are many other ways to serve your country. **—Geronimo Clitar, Riverside, California (via e-mail)**

GORDON: Rues lack of disgust.

SABIO refused to answer.

Philcomsat inquiry bares agency's 'guts'

From page A1

of Gordon's inquiry.

Appalling apathy

"What is particularly abhorrent is the inaction, the lack of umbrage, the lack of disgust," he says, from both the public and government officials to his inquiry in spite of the wide publicity that it generated. "It is appalling, this apathy," he says.

During the hearings, Gordon says he received documents about the fabulous emoluments that PCGG nominees enjoyed in POTC and Philcomsat.

When the PCGG was created in the first executive order issued by President Corazon Aquino following the triumph of the peaceful People Power revolution of 1986 that drove the dictator Ferdinand Marcos into exile, it laid down ground rules for its agents.

The PCGG's main task was to go after the hidden wealth of Marcos, his family and associates and to gather evidence so that they could be prosecuted. It has recovered $1.2 billion of the estimated $10 billion in assets the strongman and his cronies allegedly stashed here and abroad.

One of the restrictions against the PCGG agents was that they shouldn't get more than P12,000 in monthly fees and allowances.

Benefits beyond limits

Official documents that fell into the committee's hands during its hearings on PCGG's takeover of POTC showed that allowances of the administration nominees who became its top officers and directors went beyond the limit provided by law and included cars and houses, Gordon says.

"Directors were getting P15 million, P12 million, P10 million and these are people without an investment. It was just a nominal investment—nominee," says Gordon.

Gordon furnished the INQUIRER a copy of Philcomsat's record of total emoluments from 2003 to 2005, detailing the monies handed out to its top officials.

A Securities and Exchange Commission document on Philcomsat financial statements included an item on the purchase of vehicles for Philcomsat officers that amounted to P26.3 million as of Dec. 31, 2004.

40 major companies

Another item in this SEC paper was dated Sept. 9, 2005, "cash for Sandiganbayan TRO (temporary restraining order) POTC-Philcomsat case—P2 million." Still another was "representation to Supreme Court—P206,000" on Sept. 21, 2005. Millions of pesos were paid in lawyers' fees and public relations and media services.

"The very fact that the Sandiganbayan appears there indicates the brazenness of these people or at least the very inexcusable irresponsibility, if you want to give them the benefit of the doubt, in putting in an accounting document the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan, not to mention the fact that they're spending for media," says Gordon.

"They were so comfortable. It's the policeman investigating. Nobody is investigating the policeman," he says.

"This is the PCGG exposed down to its guts, from the chairman to all the members of the PCGG and this is just one corporation. Imagine the 39 other corporations, and imagine if you go back each year, and year after year," says Gordon.

He says he fears investigating all the 40 major companies under the control of PCGG agents, plus another 200 minor firms under sequestration.

"If I open (this inquiry) and nothing happens to it, we will just bring the morale of this country down," says Gordon. "I'm just focusing on one," he says of his inquiry into Philcomsat.

Lesson of Al Capone

He points to the lesson of an American mobster: "Al Capone got hit with a tax evasion case."

The committee inquiry on Philcomsat last year was interrupted after its chair, Camilo L. Sabio, refused to answer questions and was cited in contempt. Sabio says the PCGG's original orders issued during the "revolutionary government" formed after Edsa I were still in effect.

But the Supreme Court, in a ruling last October, said that those orders had been superseded by the new Constitution promulgated in 1987.

Gordon says the PCGG record through the past 21 years was "dismal" and it showed in his committee's inquiry last year.

"It mesmerized us," he says. "It was like a soap opera. It kept opening and unraveling and creating more questions as we asked. It showed PCGG violating its own code, its own rules."

Law for abolition

He says the Senate panel members were "astounded and chagrined" at the lack of "command responsibility" in the PCGG, the finger-pointing and the reference to the shield provided by the executive order that created it in the first place.

"I'd like to come out with a piece of legislation," says Gordon. "Hopefully, it could be the abolition of the PCGG. It could be [on the] transfer [of] the assets of these (sequestered) corporations to the APT (Asset Privatization Trust) or whatever agency now in charge of disposing these assets," he says.

"I think the government has no business running a business like this." *With reports from TJ Burgonio, Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research*

GMA, FVR lead Edsa wreath-laying rites; no yellow confetti, no Cory

By Julie M. Aurelio

THERE WAS NO YELLOW CONfetti, only pink flower petals showered from a helicopter overhead at yesterday's Edsa wreath-laying rites at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio.

Former President Corazon Aquino, one of the icons of the 1986 People Power revolution, was also conspicuously absent at the low-key, early morning rites.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos, who as Philippine Constabulary chief ignited, along with then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, the breakaway from the dictator Ferdinand Marcos 21 years ago, stood beside President Macapagal-Arroyo as the guest of honor.

During his speech, Ramos bewailed that the spirit of Edsa was waning with each passing year, and that Filipinos didn't seem to see its relevance. He said that in recent years, the Feb. 22-25, 1986, revolt that ended the 20-year Ferdinand Marcos regime had been marked by cynicism.

People indifferent

"Many of our young people and even elected leaders today seem indifferent to the spirit of what has become known as the Edsa Revolution," he said. "Regretfully, the prevailing view is that Edsa was no big deal ... that Edsa is no longer that important seems more and more the conventional wisdom ... as the event recedes into the fog of history."

Director General Oscar Calderon said the Philippine National Police went on nationwide alert yesterday as a precaution "to thwart any plan to disrupt the celebration by any group."

A year ago, Ms Arroyo, embroiled in a political crisis over allegations she had cheated in the 2004 presidential election, declared a weeklong state of emergency after accusing disgruntled soldiers and communist rebels of plotting to oust her. Twenty-eight military officers are facing court-martial.

Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, PNP spokesperson, said there should be enough police on standby "to address any situation." No specific threats were cited.

The Edsa revolt was a watershed event in Philippine history. It provided iconic images of nuns kneeling in prayer in front of tanks, and unarmed civilians trying to push back the tanks with their bare hands.

Political instability

Twenty-one years later, the Philippines is still suffering from political instability, corruption, poverty and communist and Muslim insurgencies.

Ms Arroyo continues to be hounded by allegations of rigging the 2004 vote. She has survived three attempts to oust her since she came to power in 2001 after her predecessor, Joseph Estrada, was removed in a second "people power" revolt.

Estrada is on trial on plunder charges and is being held under house arrest in his resthouse near Manila. He is still viewed as the leader of the opposition and wants to campaign for opposition senatorial candidates in the May elections.

'Key players just get older'

Ramos lamented the political divisions in the country. He said the 1986 revolt "may have lost its meaning for many of our people (because) we abused the freedom we recovered—and mismanaged the democracy we regained."

Ms Arroyo's administration suffered embarrassment on Wednesday when a UN investigator blamed the country's military for being "in a state of denial" over a series of killings of left-wing activists, which he said involved a significant number of soldiers.

In 21 years, little has changed in the Philippines, said University of the Philippines political scientist Clarita Carlos.

"The key players just get older," she said. *With reports from AP, AFP*

SC rules vs Marcos aide, Sandigan, blames PCGG

From page A1

The court said this was because the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) failed to present proof to support its claim of P48 million in actual damages in relation to the Tuveras-owned Twin Peaks' use of a timber licensing agreement (TLA) that was acquired through the elder Tuvera's connection with Marcos.

The Sandiganbayan earlier upheld the Tuveras' contention the PCGG had no sufficient evidence.

The PCGG sought P48 million in damages from the respondents and said Twin Peaks' TLA should revert to the government or be canceled for having been acquired through the elder Tuvera's close ties with Marcos.

It also said the company did not qualify for a TLA because it did not have logging equipment and the importation of narra was prohibited.

The Sandiganbayan also said the government's case should be dismissed because questions about the TLA had already been passed upon in another case.

The high tribunal also noted that ill-gotten wealth cases against Marcos and his wife Imelda tended to drag on for years, and led to doubts about whether these would succeed.

"Yet, even as the prosecution of those cases have drudged on and on, the era of their final reckoning is just beginning before this Court. The heavy hammer of the law is just starting to fall," it said.

The TLA allowed Twin Peaks to operate on 26,000 hectares of forest land, annually cut 60,000 cubic meters of timber and export 10,000 cubic meters of mahogany of the narra species.

'Never again'

"If only the Court's outrage were quantifiable in sums of money, respondents are due for significant pecuniary hurt. Instead, the Court is forced to explain ... why respondents could not be forced to recompensate the Filipino people in appropriate financial terms," the tribunal said.

"The fault lies with those engaged by the government to litigate this case in behalf of the State," the court said in its Feb. 16 decision released yesterday.

The 45-page decision penned by Justice Dante Tinga also said levying of exemplary damages against the respondents would send the signal expressed by the phrase "Never Again," the battle cry against the Marcos years, and would also serve as a reminder of that dark phase in Philippine history.

It added that it was unfortunate that the government failed to prove the actual damages.

'Kleptocracy cannot pay'

"To the best of our ability, through the appropriate vehicle of exemplary damages, the Court will try to fill in that deficiency. For if there is a lesson that should be learned from the national trauma of the rule of Marcos, it is that kleptocracy cannot pay.

"As those dark years fade into the back burner of the collective memory, and a new generation emerges without proximate knowledge of how bad it was then, it is useful that the Court serves a reminder here and now," it said.

Impudent abuse

But the Supreme Court said that "the backdoor recourse for a hugely priced favor from the government by itself, and more in tandem with other brazen relevant damning circumstances, indicates the impudent abuse of power and the detestable misuse of influence that homologously made the acquisition of ill-gotten wealth a reality."

The court said while the younger Tuvera had the right to secure the license, the father should not have helped him get it.

The court noted that no public bidding took place and pointed out that Twin Peaks thought it could just walk up to Marcos to ask for a TLA as shown by its letter to the late President.

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Pineda to Lapid: Stop pressuring GMA

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—BOARD MEMBER Lilia Pineda urged Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid to "stop pressuring" President Macapagal-Arroyo, their province mate, into endorsing his son, reelectionist Gov. Mark Lapid, as the administration's official bet for governor in Pampanga.

"[Senator Lapid] should stop pressuring the President. She has [lots of] work and problems to deal with. Because this is local politics, he and his son should not depend on the President. If they claimed they served the Kapampangans well and they claimed they have done a lot, why don't they just subject themselves to the judgment of the people?" Pineda told the INQUIRER on Thursday.

Pineda, wife of suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, is challenging the young Lapid in the May elections.

She called to give her reaction to the persistent assertion by the Lapids of the "equity of the incumbent" rule in the selection of local candidates by the ruling coalition.

The senator invoked this as he demanded to be the host of the coalition's Team Unity campaign rally in Pampanga on Tuesday.

Pineda's reaction also came as the senator met with reelectionist opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson in Clark on Wednesday, taking that to mean as "another political move to force the President to consider his son."

"I have nothing against Senator Lacson. What I see is that Senator Lapid is using him to bully the President," she said.

Pineda said she already broke the dilemma of Ms Arroyo when she decided last week not to seek her endorsement or the backing of the coalition anymore.

"The local election is mainly a campaign in the grassroots. And then I want to spare the President from this problem on who to chose between me and Mark. She's my town mate (in Lubao). I respect her. So this will be my own fight. I will not pester her," she said.

"Let [the May election] be a showdown just between me and Mark, a contest between good and bad governance, service versus corruption."

Fidel Arcenas, the governor's campaign manager, denied doing pressure tactics on the President.

"That is not their trait. In fact, they're very timid. They don't feel comfortable bringing up personal concerns with the President," Arcenas said in a phone interview.

"What we are trying to insist on is the equity of the incumbent rule. We want that to be upheld by the coalition," he said.

According to Arcenas, the senator's hosting of Lacson was "not political." "Senator Lapid did not break his commitment to deliver a straight victory for the administration's senatorial ticket. He did the same in 2004," he said.

On Thursday, the provincial chapter of the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), Ms Arroyo's home party, clarified that the Pampanga showdown was not mainly between the Lapids and Pineda, including her husband.

"This is between the mayors and the Lapids. We started this, and push Atching Baby (Lilia's nickname) in the fight. We're sick by the graft and corruption, inefficiency and lack of direction by Governor Lapid," said Candaba Mayor Jerry Pelayo, spokesperson of Kampi in Pampanga.

"For us mayors, there is no more chance of a Mark-Lilia team-up. We want good governance," Pelayo said. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Woman files rape complaint vs Iloilo priest

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—A 25-YEAR-OLD WOMAN FILED on Wednesday a criminal complaint for two counts of rape against a parish priest in Iloilo.

In a four-page affidavit filed before the Iloilo provincial prosecutor's office, Nene (not her real name), said the priest allegedly raped her twice this month after she tried to end their month-long relationship.

The woman's cousin and legal counsel accompanied her to the Hall of Justice where assistant provincial prosecutor Rodrigo Camacho subscribed her complaint and affidavit.

Fr. Ryan Teves, head of the Commission on Social Communications of the Archdiocese of Jaro, said the archdiocese could not issue a statement on the case at this time.

The priest who is assigned to one of the towns in Iloilo could not be reached for comment.

In her affidavit, Nene said she met the priest when a friend, the priest's relative, introduced them at the parish church were the priest was assigned.

Shortly after, she said, the priest began courting her and would send her text messages or call her through her mobile phone often.

Nene said they became lovers after a month. She alleged that the priest promised to leave the priesthood and marry her after a year. The priest also told her he wanted to have children, she added.

The alleged victim said they met at the priest's residence, which is not in the town where he is assigned, to avoid a scandal.

But Nene said she was bothered by her conscience as their relationship went on because her lover is a priest.

When the priest asked her to go to his house on Feb. 1, she decided to tell him that she wanted to end their relationship.

But Nene said the priest refused to end their relationship and even threatened her, forcing her to slap him on the face. The priest then allegedly grabbed both her hands and threw her on his bed before raping her.

The alleged victim said she pretended as if nothing had happened after the rape. She said she did not file a case against the priest because she still loved him and because of his vocation.

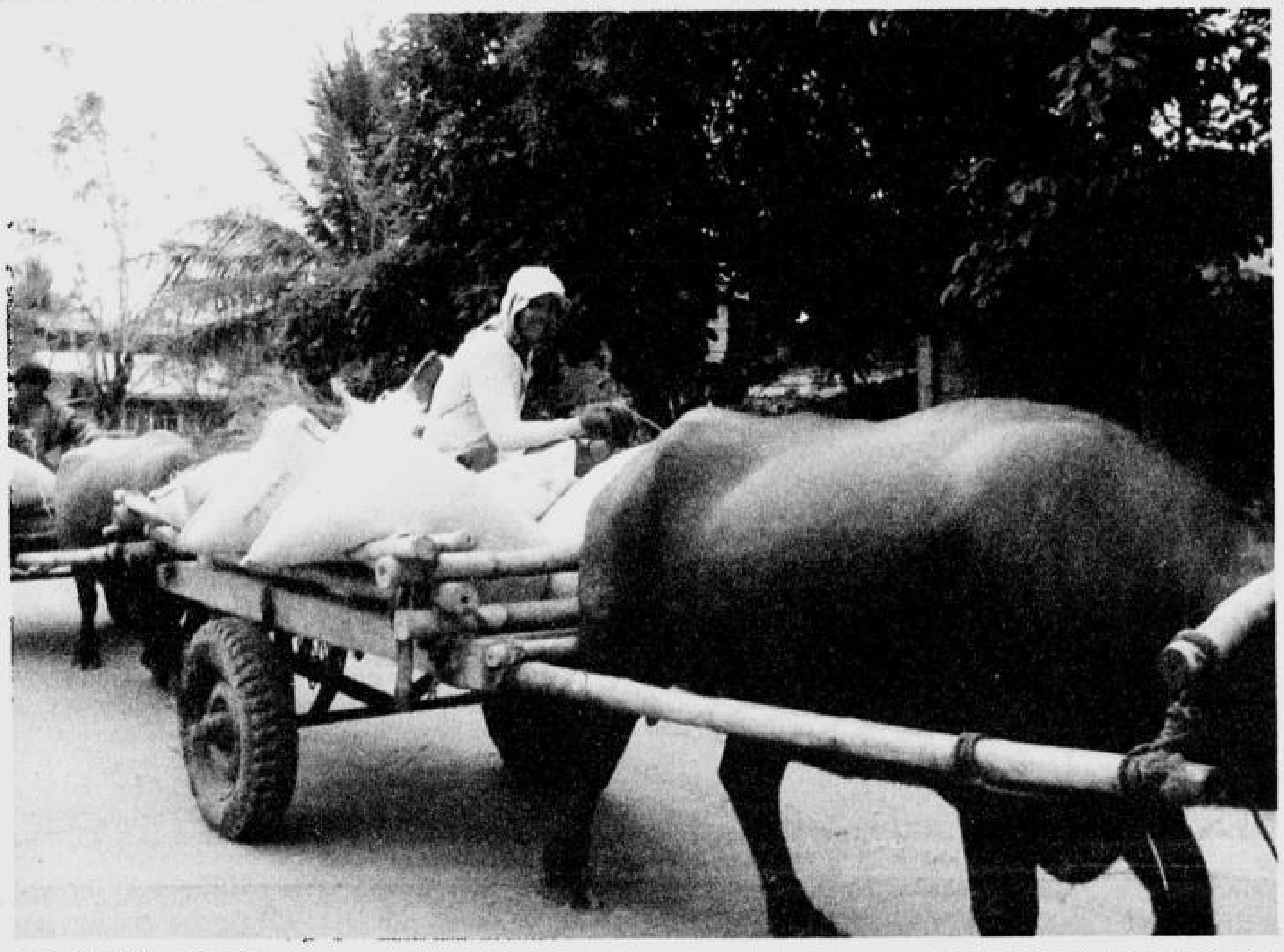
On Feb. 6, Nene returned to the priest's house early in the morning to tell his mother about what he had done. But the priest raped her again. When the priest went to the bathroom, she left the house and went to the house of a second cousin, she said.

Nene said she went back to the priest's house later in the day when she learned that his co-priest would be going there so she could inform the latter about the rape.

But when she got there, she said, the priest manhandled her and threatened to kill her, prompting her to leave the house.

The Misamis lawyer said his client was committed to pursue the case although she realized that she would face difficulties since she is accusing a priest.

"All she wants is justice for what had happened to her," Romero told the INQUIRER.



VILLAMOR VISAYA JR./INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

CARABAO POWER
Despite the advent of agricultural machineries and transportation facilities, the carabao remains the usual transport animal among village folk in San Jose, Delfin Albano, Isabela.

Waste recycling firm denies toxic fumes emission

LEGAZPI CITY—SAFECO ENVIronment Services Inc. (Safeco), a waste-recycling firm in Barangay Mabca, Sangay, Camarines Sur, never burns industrial wastes and, thus, could not have emitted toxic fumes after a fire occurred in its premises late last year, said Joy Cedo, Safeco assistant vice president.

An earlier report said Gov. Luis Raymund Villafuerte was pushing for the immediate closure of the plant after it emitted toxic fumes from burning industrial wastes and that dozens of coastal villagers were taken ill by the fumes.

In a statement sent to the INQUIRER, Cedo explained that the Nov. 27 fire in its facility was accidental in nature and involved only the burning of tarpaulin when the gardener set on fire cut-grass and plastics that accidentally spread to the tarpaulin inside the facility.

"There was not a trace of industrial waste or chemical product that was involved in the fire. It was fallacious to claim that the fire emitted toxic fumes," she said.

Burned

An investigating team from the environment department determined that the things that burned were tarpaulins, she added.

According to Cedo, the Provincial Health Office found that majority of the villagers were suffering from tuberculosis and respiratory diseases.

"Though far from being the cause of their long-existing illness, the fire had been conveniently made a 'culprit' in the 'malicious claims' of Safeco's detractors," she said.

Contrary to assertions of Villafuerte and provincial officials that the firm's environmental compliance certificate expired in August 2006, she said Safeco's ECC has no expiration.

The company maintained that it was granted ECC and TSD (treatment storage disposal) registration certificate by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources after it was rigorously determined to be qualified and competent to operate as such.

Inquirer Southern Luzon

Police tag Samar election hot spot

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE PHILIPPINE NATIONal Police has identified Samar province as an election hot spot, or "an area of concern," citing the recent series of killings as the reason.

Already, 50 members of the Regional Mobile Group, based at the regional PNP headquarters in Palo, Leyte, arrived Tuesday at the provincial police headquarters in Catbalogan, Samar to help secure the province for the May 14 elections, Samar provincial director Senior Supt. Asdali Abah said.

"They will be deployed to areas where peace and order is threatened … in relation to the conduct of the elections," Abah, told the INQUIRER.

He, however, maintained that while a series of killings took place in different parts of Samar, the situation there remained "manageable."

"While I cannot make an assurance that the province will be violence-free as we conduct our elections, at least I can still say that our situation there is still manageable," Abah said.

Among those who died were Daram Mayor Benito Astorga, who was killed by a lone assailant on Jan. 25; and Councilor Vivencio Yantos of San Jose de Buan, who was killed on Feb. 20. Vice Mayor Francisco Langi Sr. of Motiong town survived an attempt on his life on Feb. 6.

During the 2004 elections, 19 of the provinces' 25 towns were identified as "areas of concern" or hot spots by the Commission on Elections upon the recommendation of the PNP.

Samar Rep. Catalino Figueroa welcomed the placing of the province as an "area of concern."

He said the deployment of additional policemen, on top of the present policemen assigned in the province, could help deter the occurrence of violence.

"Of course, this will help the province have peaceful and orderly elections," Figueroa said.

The solon had earlier asked the Comelec to place the province under its control and supervision.

Figueroa later agreed to withdraw his proposal when Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos informed him that the poll body would run the affairs of an area placed under its control and supervision and not just augment security forces.

Lawyer Jose Nick Mendros, assistant Comelec regional director, said declaring Samar as an "area of concern" would ensure the peaceful elections in the province.

Sulu

In Sulu, the Comelec said only five towns of the island-province would be watched for possible violence that could disrupt the elections. The province has always been tagged as an area of concern during elections with the military providing security.

Lawyer Vidzfar Julie, Comelec director for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said the presence of the Abu Sayyaf and other armed groups pose a threat to the orderly conduct of the elections in Sulu.

The police have earlier said the proliferation of loose firearms—estimated at 10,060—also contributed to the declaration of Sulu as an area of concern.

Sulu has 18 towns and its voting population is 251,960 as of Jan. 18, according to Julie.

Julie said soldiers will be deployed in Patikul, Indanan, Kalinggalang Caluang, Panamao and Panglima Estino.

Maj. Eugene Batara, spokesperson of the military's Western Mindanao Command, said the manhunt for the Abu Sayyaf would still be conducted during the elections.

He said the military has enough troops in Sulu to conduct the manhunt and secure the elections at the same time.

Meanwhile, Washington might send observers to the conduct of the elections in Mindanao.

"We may have a team of observers from the Embassy although nothing has been confirmed yet, but it's certainly a possibility," Matthew Lussenhop, spokesperson of the United States Embassy in Manila, said yesterday.

During the ARMM election in 2005, the US sent 39 observers. *Julie Alipala with a report from Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao*

No clash took place with Abu Sayyaf in Sulu—Army, MNLF

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE MILItary in Sulu and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) have confirmed that the deaths of a 14-year-old boy and a soldier were not the result of a clash with the Abu Sayyaf contrary to an earlier claim by the Army.

The conclusion was made after a joint military-MNLF peace team conducted an investigation of the incident.

Earlier, the Army said Scout Ranger soldiers killed two Abu Sayyaf bandits during a clash in Barangay Tagbak in Indanan on Monday evening. Only one body from the bandit group had been recovered, it said.

Maj. Gen. Ruperto Pabustan of the Joint Special Operations in Sulu also reported that one soldier was killed in the alleged battle.

After the investigation, it was found that the supposed second casualty on the side of what the Army claimed was a band of Abu Sayyaf bandits, only suffered injuries.

Al Mujahid Biao, deputy commander of MNLF's military affairs, said both suspected bandits were actually civilians related to a ranking MNLF commander in Indanan.

He identified the dead victim as Abdulhakim Abbilul, a first year high school student at the Fisheries School in Jolo. The wounded victim was identified as 18-year-old Sarib Ollah.

Biao said the area where the supposed encounter took place was actually a peace zone where firearms were not allowed.

"It was an unfortunate incident. They were hit in the crossfire. They were not Abu Sayyaf, they are civilians," Col. Demetrio Ramon, deputy commander of the Joint Task Force Comet, confirmed.

Ramon said the investigation of the incident was conducted with the MNLF on Feb. 20.

Recounting the events, Ollah said he met Abbilul, who was on his way home at about 7 p.m., after buying 10 kilos of rice.

He said Abbilul's house is near Barangay Marang, also in Indanan so they agreed to go home together.

Ollah said he and Abbilul decided to stop by a house showing their favorite television soap operas.

He said it was already about 9 p.m. when they decided to finally go home along with two other teenagers.

He said while approaching the peace zone in Barangay Kasambahan, a group of soldiers stopped them and immediately asked them to lie face down.

Ollah said the two teenagers, whom he did not identify, ran because of fear while Abbilul approached the soldiers while explaining they were not bad elements.

Ollah said that while Abbilul was talking to the soldiers, he also ran away but was fired upon.

He said he saw Abbilul kneeling down, apparently pleading for his life.

"Abbilul was holding one of the soldiers on the leg so when the other soldiers fired, both of them were hit. Four other soldiers standing near them were also hit," Biao said, explaining why one soldier died while four others were injured.

He said the incident was apparently triggered by the "darkness and panic."

Ramon said what occurred was a clear manifestation of a "mis-coordination" on the side of the military.

"There were actually two groups of soldiers on both sides of the area. The other group was securing a cordoned area where US forces would be conducting humanitarian missions. When the teenagers ran, the Scout Rangers chased them. The other group mistook the chasing soldiers for enemies so they fired on them," Ramon said.

Despite Ramon's statement, Pabustan stood by his earlier report about an encounter with the Abu Sayyaf group led by Julasbi Asmad and Albader Parad.

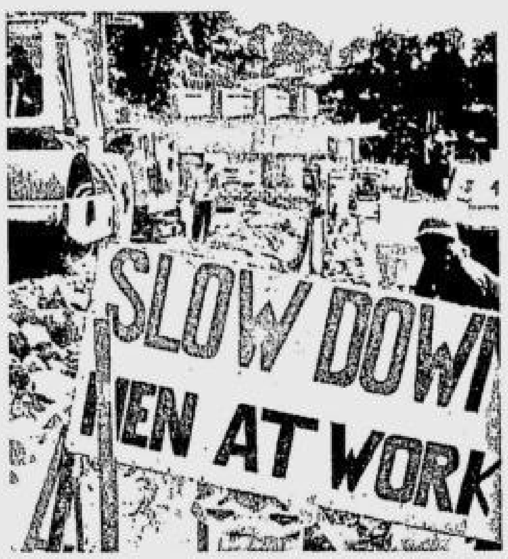
Ramon said there was indeed a legitimate operation after the military confirmed reports that a large group of Abu Sayyaf bandits, along with Indonesian bombers Dulmatin and Patek, were holed near Barangay Tagbak.

He said the Scout Rangers were being guided by a US spy plane.

"The spy plane sighted the bandits about two kilometers away from where the incident took place," Ramon said. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

Flyover to slow down Baguio traffic until 2010

By Donna Demetillo and Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon



E.V. ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

THE DEPARTMENT of Public Works and Highways is awaiting fund to complete the Baguio flyover project.

BAGUIO CITY—Visitors entering the city will endure slow-moving traffic until 2010 because of mistakes that have now delayed the completion of a controversial Baguio flyover.

The Department of Public Works and Highways had bragged that the 296-meter flyover was the solution to traffic jams in this part of the summer capital.

The flyover will cross the rotunda that leads to Marcos Highway and Kennon Road, the two main arteries to the city.

But a DPWH official told the city council on Monday that an oversight in calculating the flyover budget and materials forced the contractor to slow down work there.

DPWH Cordillera director Mariano Alquiza confirmed that his office underestimated the rate of inflation that has pushed up the project's original cost of P88 million to P180 million to complete the flyover.

Suspended Mayor Braulio Yaranon had objected to the flyover project in 2004, after confirming that DPWH relied on a P44-million outlay to start the project. The P44 million was saved up from the loan used to modernize the Marcos Highway.

He said he was being cautious because DPWH did not issue any assurance that the government would continue funding the whole project, once it consumed the P44 million startup budget, and the P44 million eventually appropriated by Congress.

In 2005, President Macapagal-Arroyo decided to realign the loan savings to build Benguet roads and cable cars instead, but was prevailed upon by DPWH officials to support the flyover, Yaranon said.

Alquiza said a P70-increase for a bag of cement, a P200- to P250-increase for a cubic meter of gravel and sand, and even an P87-increase in the pay of the work crew's foreman forced the DPWH to seek an additional P64 million to finish the flyover in 2010.

The estimates were done in 2000 before the project was bid out in 2001, he said.

The DPWH began the project using 210,547.71 kilograms of materials, when it should have bought 345,487.04 kg. He told the council that this had been corrected and the project was running on schedule.

"After June, there will be no more activities except for Phase 4 until the additional funding is [released]," Alquiza told the council.

He said Phase 1 of the project is 48 percent complete. The flyover's foundation posts have been raised, but there is no money left to bridge them.

The flyover's Phase 2 was completed in December 2006, while Phase 3 is 30 percent complete, he said.

DPWH has put Phase 4 up for bidding. "We are requesting for additional funds and if we get the money by next year, we expect to complete the project by 2010," he said.

He said the project could only proceed in 2008 because it normally takes the government a year to process funding requests.

Yaranon said he inspected the project on Monday and was convinced the DPWH had also shortened the flyover's span based on comparisons made by engineers that he tapped.

He said they compared the facilities recently built by the DPWH with the project floor plans and detailed engineering schematics.

"There is something they are not telling us. They have not been transparent about the project," he said.

The original flyover measured only 178 meters until the DPWH discovered that this span would not be able to carry the volume of vehicles coming from the Marcos Highway.

The DPWH first proposed to build a vehicular underpass where the flyover project is now located. The government withdrew the project when Baguio environmentalists pointed out that the area used to be a Baguio marshland.

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Dr. Myles Munroe

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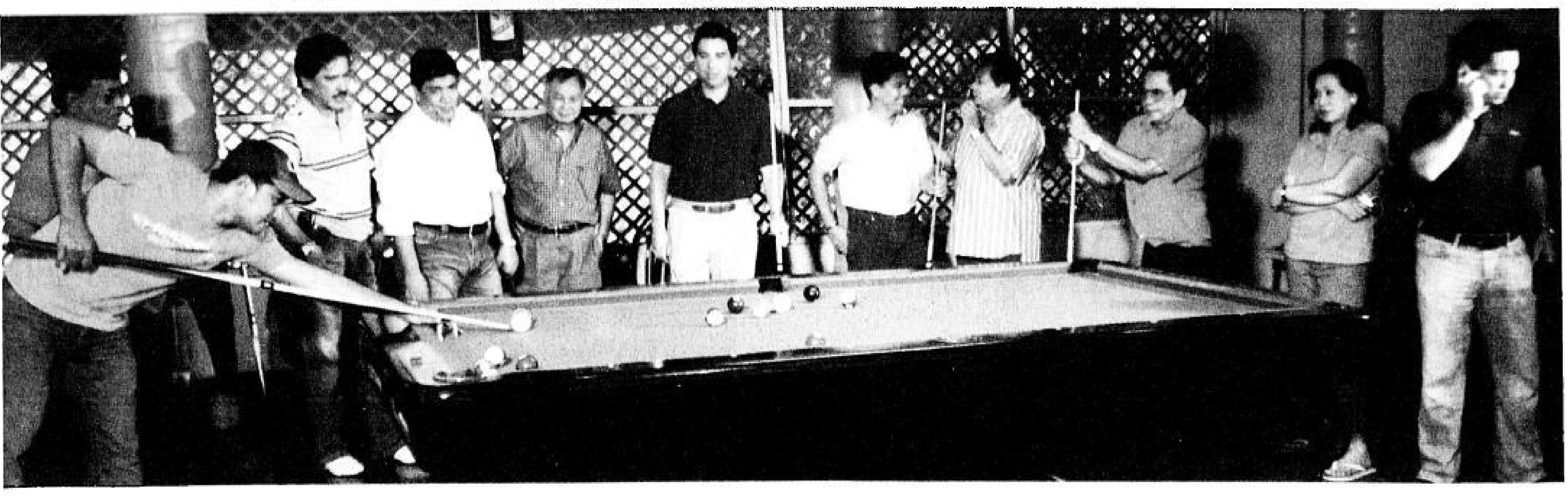


POOL SHARKS Senatorial candidates of Team Unity play billiards during a break from their political campaign to shoot a political ad at the Villa Escudero, in Tiaong, Quezon. They are (from left): Kiram, Montano, Sotto, Pichay, Arroyo, Recto, Defensor, Magsaysay, Singson, Oreta and Zubiri. Not in photo is Angara.
RANDY HORMILLOSA

'Hello Garci' touches raw nerve at Comelec

By Nikko Dizon

BITTER MEMORIES OF THE "Hello Garci" controversy resonated at the Commission on Elections office yesterday as an activist priest and Commissioner Resurreccion Borra engaged in a shouting match.

The newly organized Kontra-Daya group, led by former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, Jr. and activist priest, Fr. Joe Dizon, went to Borra's office to invite Comelec officials to a meeting on Monday.

Kontra-Daya said it wanted to have a "constructive engagement with the Comelec so that the anticipated systematic and massive fraud in this year's mid-term elections may be prevented, thwarted, or at the minimum exposed, and those responsible rightfully punished."

Tempers flared when the group raised the "Hello Garci" issue, accusing the Comelec of failing to investigate the controversy involving illegally recorded phone conversations about the election results in Mindanao between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Volatile situation

"We would not be in this very volatile situation if the 'Hello Garci' tape did not happen, if you had investigated... it would have put closure to that," Dizon shouted.

Borra shouted back, saying that the Comelec couldn't have conducted an investigation as Garcillano was a commissioner.

"If the Comelec had conducted an investigation and he was acquitted, you would have said '*daya!*' [it was rigged)," he said.

Borra said Congress was the best institution to investigate the Hello Garci controversy.

But Dizon said the Congress investigation was merely a "numbers game."

"Most likely, you do not trust the Comelec also," said Borra.

"Definitely! I'm not trusting you! That's precisely why we have organized and that's why we are engaging you because we do not trust you that you can give us a credible election," said Dizon.

Borra said the lingering perception that the Comelec cheats was unfair.

He told the group that he has never cheated in his 46 years at the Comelec.

The pervading "culture of distrust" was not good for the country, he said.

If only all citizens were as "critical, destructively or constructively," it could translate to vigilance that would lead to clean and credible elections.

Dizon said that it was exactly what Kontra-Daya was doing, devoting time, money and talent to ensuring the May elections are clean.

Closure

At which Borra smiled and said: "That is the best. Congratulations, I like it!"

The two men shook hands.

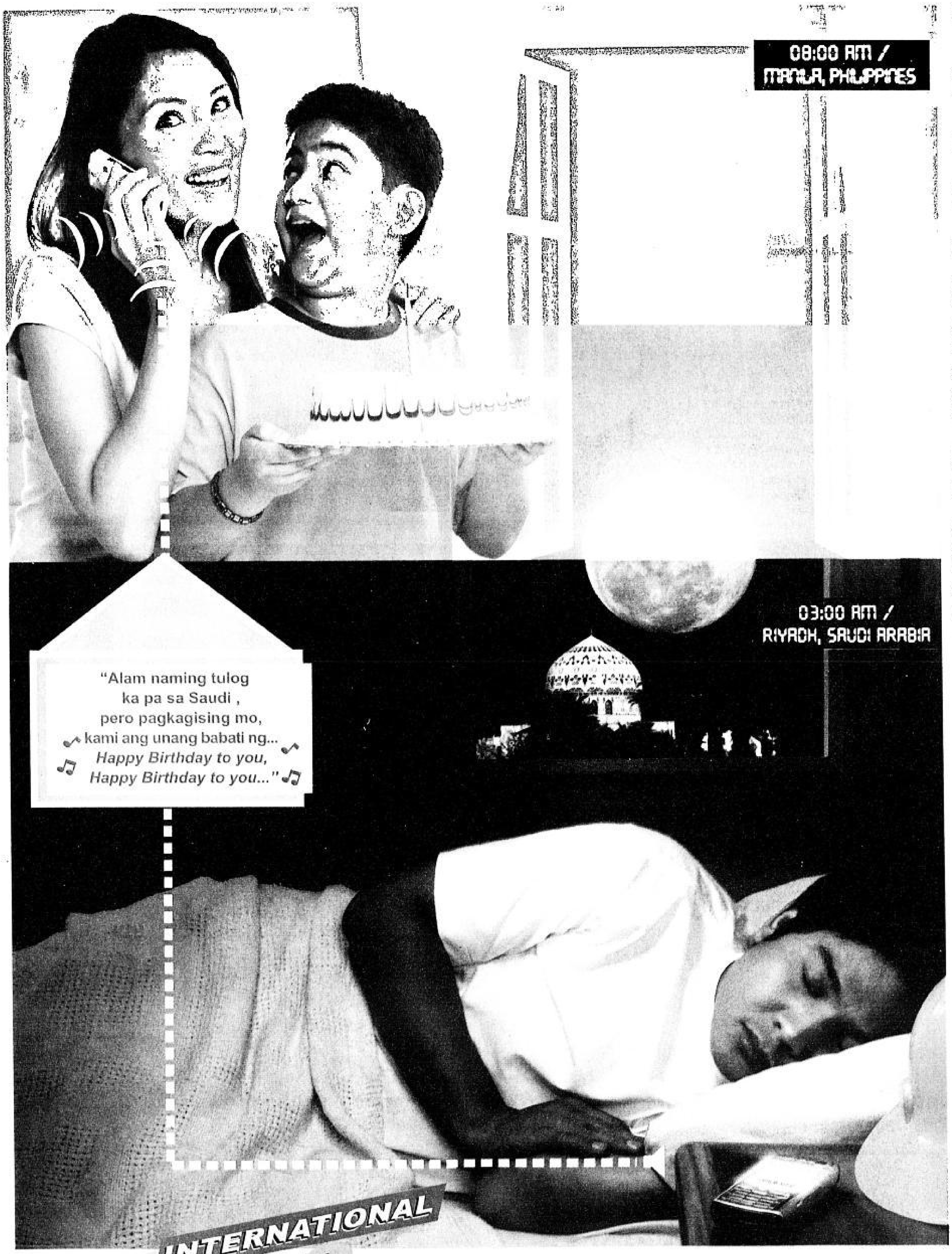
Guingona stressed the need to "put closure" to the scandal of the 2004 presidential elections.

"The perception that there will be massive cheating is something we cannot afford anymore," he said.

Borra and Commissioner Rene Sarmiento have separately said that the May 14 midterm elections would be a "litmus test" of the poll body's credibility as an institution.

"We have to do our best to make this a credible election to redeem the Comelec's name, because if it fails, [the Comelec] would be beyond redemption," Sarmiento said in a phone interview.

Borra said the Comelec's response to the public's distrust was to prepare very well for the May 14 elections and ensure transparency.



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'No security cameras in 18 Pasig banks'

Monitoring device a BSP requirement

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

CHOOSING BANKS? POLICE ARE ADVISING customers to check first if the bank has adequate security gadgets and alarm systems.

"Bank customers should now be more aware if their banks are well-secured and can ensure the safety of their clients," Pasig City Police chief Senior Supt. Francisco Uyami told the INQUIRER yesterday.

He said that of the 168 banks in Pasig City, at least 18 are not equipped with closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras to monitor and record activities inside and outside the premises, based on inquiries and inspection trips made by the city police in the past few days. Uyami said a CCTV system usually cost about P30,000. "That is a

'NO SECURITY'/ A20

WINNING IN THE 2007 ELECTIONS **(Feb. 27, 2007)** Topics: Effective Campaign Team & Platform (Reuben Yambot); Making Your Campaign Strategy Work (Atty. Rolando Ramirez); ICT & Data Mining (Albert Lim); Applying Sun Tzu's *Art of War* in Your Campaign (Antonio Concepcion); How to Counter Cheating. Richville Hotel, 286 EDSA, Mandaluyong City, 8am-5pm. Get 10% early bird/group discount. To register, call Leading Edge Forum for Excellence, Inc. at 578-9833; 531-0084: 0919-2299777; 0919-2299780; 0915-7804379; email at: tritium@pldtdsl.net; leffeinc@yahoo.com. Limited seats only. Register Now!

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Tug-of-war over witness in Pasig shabu case

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

LAW ENFORCERS WERE LOCKED in a tug-of-war yesterday for the custody of a government witness testifying against the suspected owner of a compound of shabu shanties in Pasig City.

Tension is also brewing between the Philippine National Police Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force (AIDSOTF) and the National Bureau of Investigation.

The AIDSOTF, in a motion, and citing intelligence information, alleged that suspected drug den operator Amin Imam Boratong had been going in and out of his detention cell at the NBI.

NBI operatives, who also escorted Boratong at the Pasig Regional Trial Court yesterday, were supposed to take over the custody of accuser Samer Palao, who was being escorted by Pasig City policemen.

The NBI was assisting a process server of a regional trial court in Misamis Oriental who is in town to serve an arrest warrant on Palao for the kidnapping with murder charges filed against him.

But even before the NBI operatives could lay their hands on Palao, and even before the process server could reach him, Pasig police managed to escort Palao out of the Pasig City RTC Branch 154 courtroom and out of the Pasig City Justice Building in less than five minutes, his left hand handcuffed to the right hand of a policeman.

"We will file criminal charges against those who violated and defied a clear and valid order of a court," lawyer Raymund Fortun, who is defending Boratong, told the INQUIRER.

He said he would also ask Pasig RTC Branch 154 Abraham Borreta, who is handling the drug charges against Boratong, to inhibit himself from the case for "showing clear bias in favor of (Palao)."

Fortun had asked Borreta to instruct the Pasig police to hand over Palao to the NBI and to the Misamis Oriental RTC process server. A court order to bring Palao from the PNP Custodial Center, where Palao is detained, to Cagayan de Oro City, where he is scheduled for arraignment next week, was shown by Fortun.

But Borreta refused to issue any ruling, saying the matter had to be addressed to the PNP Custodial Center. He also said he wanted to see Palao complete his testimony. "Where is the bias there?" Borreta asked reporters.

Police officials securing Palao had earlier expressed alarm about Palao's safety once he is transferred to Cagayan de Oro City, in the same way that Fortun had expressed concern for Boratong if he is detained at the Pasig City Jail early in the trial.

Boratong is now detained at the NBI but yesterday, the AIDSOTF asked the court to transfer Boratong from the NBI to the Pasig City Jail.

In its motion to transfer, the AIDSOTF said Boratong "seemingly enjoys special privileges from the NBI at the expense of the authority of the Honorable Court."

Tight security for GO proclamation rally in Manila

By Tina G. Santos and Allison W. Lopez

TIGHT SECURITY MEASURES are being adopted by the Manila police for the proclamation rally of the Genuine Opposition (GO) senatorial slate at Plaza Miranda on Saturday.

Mayor Lito Atienza, an administration ally, granted the permit for the group's use of Plaza Miranda. However, the candidates and their supporters cannot march or have a motorcade to or from the venue.

Ferdie Ramos of the Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino said the opposition group planned to converge at Plaza Miranda from three assembly points—Liwasang Bonifacio, Avenida Rizal and the University of Santo Tomas.

Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa, acting chief of the Manila Police District (MPD), said hundreds of policemen would be deployed to ensure the safety of opposition candidates and their supporters.

He said the MPD would be augmented by the district's K-9 units and Special Weapons and Tactics division.

Policemen in plainclothes would also be deployed, Abarzosa said. "We expect a peaceful gathering, but we cannot be complacent so we have laid out an elaborate security (arrangement)," he added.

Ramos, GO's campaign operations manager, said they decided to hold the proclamation rally at the historic Plaza Miranda, a freedom park, because it was close to Malacañang, seat of the administration, and "the issue (in the elections)."

GO earlier was choosing between San Juan and Makati City, opposition strongholds, before opting for Manila.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, president of the United Opposition, said Plaza Miranda was a good choice because of its role in the country's political history.

The GO's request for a permit to hold a rally from 8 a.m. to 12 midnight was approved immediately, but with restrictions, after it was filed on Feb. 20 by Ramos.

The permit prohibits the opposition group from causing obstruction or road closure, and from committing any subversive act. The head of the Manila office that processes the permits said the limitations were standard requirements.

"They can criticize the government because that's part of freedom of speech, as long as (the activity) doesn't become subversive," said Richard Zacarias, chief of staff of the City Hall's business and promotions development office. "But they are not allowed to march."

Fined Briton gets money back from Makati City

By DJ Yap

BRITON TERRY GRIFFITHS nearly lost his faith in Filipinos when a Makati City traffic enforcer fined him P1,000 for illegal parking and refused to issue a receipt when he asked for one.

But after filing a complaint with the Makati Department of Public Safety (DPS), the British national's faith was not only restored. He will also get his money back soon.

The city government promised to reimburse him the amount, even as it suspended the erring officer for five days.

"Thank you, thank you so much. You have completely restored my faith in human nature and the Philippines," Griffiths, who is now out of the country, wrote Mayor Jejomar Binay.

In a letter of complaint, Griffiths, a retired surveyor based in Subic, Zambales, said he was apprehended by Edwin Navea for alleged illegal parking on Gil Puyat Avenue on Jan. 24.

Griffiths was asked to pay the fine but the enforcer allegedly refused to issue a receipt despite a request from the Briton.

Navea also allegedly told Griffiths that motorists could not protest apprehensions for alleged traffic violations, a claim contrary to the existing appeals mechanism under the Makati Traffic Code.

Grenade explosion in Pateros kills prankster

By Julie M. Aurelio

A MAN WHO HAD ONE DRINK too many was killed early yesterday morning by a hand grenade he used earlier to scare his neighbor.

Neighbors of Randolph Strickland, a resident of 139 M.R. Flores Street, Barangay Sto. Rosario in Pateros, were awakened by an explosion at around 4 a.m.

Based on documents recovered from the victim's house, police said Strickland, 36, was an American citizen.

The father of four children, the victim separated recently from his wife. Two of his kids, Jacky and Jet, lived with him.

SPO4 Ismael San Pedro told the INQUIRER that Strickland was drinking beer with his friends identified as "Dexter" and "Bojok" at around 3:45 a.m.

Strickland, who got the drinks on credit from a certain Cecilia Solidum, owner of a nearby *sari-sari* store, tried to get more bottles of beer but was refused.

"He went home and grabbed hold of a revolver and hand grenade, and (pointed the gun at Solidum)," case investigator PO1 Jonathan Morales said in a phone interview.

The gun was actually a toy, but the grenade was real.

Strickland's friends tried to pacify him and he was eventually persuaded to go home.

After about 15 minutes, his neighbors heard the explosion.

"I suspect the victim fell asleep because he was too drunk. Then the pin of the grenade had loosened causing the explosion," Morales told the INQUIRER.

'No security cameras ...'

From page A19

very small cost compared to the capital these banks have," he said, adding that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had long been requiring banks to install security devices like monitoring cameras.

"We will write them (banks without CCTVs) a letter about the need to install these devices," Uyami added.

Uyami said CCTVs were important not only to monitor situations in the bank but also to capture and record images of people going in and out of the premises. Robbery cases could be solved easily if police could see the images of the suspects recorded in surveillance cameras, he said.

He said that even a large bank on Shaw Boulevard did not have a CCTV. Only three weeks ago, three employees of an export company lost the P2.8 million they had withdrawn from that bank to three motorcycle-riding robbers who had apparently followed them.

The same bank did not send a representative to a meeting on security police organized on Tuesday. Of the 80 banks invited, only 13 sent representatives.

Six robberies have been reported in eastern Metro in more than three months. In all cases, motorcycle-riding robbers preyed on customers who had just withdrawn big amounts from banks.

Republic of the Philippines
City of Olongapo
-O-
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
General Services Office, 2/F City Hall Complex
Tel./Fax No. 047-222-2699
Web: www.olongapocity.gov.ph
Email: Olongapo@piol.net

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The City Government of Olongapo through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for the eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : Lease of Heavy Equipment (5 months) For Garbage Collection & Disposal
Location : Olongapo City
Contract No. : OC-041-ESMO-01-07 GD
Brief Description : Lease of (4) units dumptruck & (1) unit bulldozer
Approved Budget : Php 12,499,854.47

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to the Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

COMPLETE SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

DATE	ACTIVITIES	VENUE
Feb. 20, 2007 to Mar. 06, 2007	Posted at PhilGEPS Website & Conspicuous Places	
Mar. 06, 2007 to Mar. 12, 2007	Issuance of Bid Documents 8:00 am to 5:00 pm	BAC Secretariat 2/F Gen. Services Office, Olongapo City Hall
Mar. 13, 2007	Pre-bidding conference at 11:00 am	3rd Floor Engineering Dept., Olongapo City
Mar. 26, 2007	Opening of Bids at 11:00 am	3rd Floor Engineering Dept. Olongapo

Bid Documents will be available to prospective bidders upon payment of non-refundable bid form fee of *P22,500.00* to the Treasury Dept. Olongapo City.

The BAC reserves the right to accept and reject any bid and to cancel all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the City Government without thereby incurring any liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and obligation to inform the bidder(s) of the ground(s) for the basis of BAC's action.

(Sgd.) MERLITO J. MAJARUCON
Head, BAC Secretariat

NOTED BY:
(Sgd.) Atty. ANGELITO R. OROZCO
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Feb. 23 & 28, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE VISAYAS
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
New Administration Building, Miag-ao Campus
Tel No. (033) 315-81-41; (033) 338-1535 local 180
Fax No. (033) 315-81-41
E-mail: bac@upv.edu.ph

RE-INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
(IAETB 2007-008)

1. The UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE VISAYAS, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites qualified suppliers to re-bid for the hereunder project:

NAME OF PROJECT	Location	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)	CONTRACT DURATION
A. Supply of Security Services for the various offices of the University	Miag-ao & Iloilo Campuses, BAC at Leganes, Iloilo, Batan Research Station in Batan, Aklan, Taklong Biological Station in Guimaras and TRV Sardinella	P 7,200,000.00.	One (1) Year

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

2. All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

3. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking Security Services within the last three (3) years, with a capitalization of at least fifty (50%) of the Approved Budget for the Contract for the said project, and have the key personnel and equipment (owned, leased, or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project.

4. The schedule of activities is as follows:

Activities	Schedules	Venue
Issuance of Bid Documents	February 28, 2007 to March 7, 2007, 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM	BAC Secretariat, U.P. Visayas Miag-ao Campus
Site Inspection	March 7, 2007, 10:00 AM	C/o Mr. Vicente R. Cortez Chief, Security Services Office UPV, Miag-ao Campus
Pre-Bid Conference	March 8, 2007, 2:00 PM	Tea Room, Cafeteria Building U.P. Visayas Iloilo City Campus
Opening of Bids	March 21, 2007, 2:00 PM	Tea Room, Cafeteria Building U.P. Visayas Iloilo City Campus

5. Bid Opening shall be on March 21, 2007, 2:00 PM to be held at the Tea Room, Cafeteria Building, U.P. Visayas, Iloilo City Campus to be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives. LATE BIDS SHALL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

6. The BAC will issue Eligibility Forms to interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **P200.00** and a complete set of bidding documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (**P5,000.00**) to the University Cashier. The bidding documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or his authorized representative starting February 28, 2007.

7. Bids must be delivered to the BAC at or before 2:00 PM on March 21, 2007 at the Tea Room, Cafeteria Building, U.P. Visayas, Iloilo City Campus. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following forms and schedule:

Form of Bid Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid
a) Cash, certified check, cashier's check manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	one percent (1%) of ABC
b) Bank Guarantee	one and a half percent (1-1/2%) of ABC

8. **Request for clarification(s) on any part of the bidding documents or for an interpretation must be in writing and submitted to the BAC Secretariat at least Ten (10) calendar days before the deadline set for the submission and receipt of bids.**

9. **The University of the Philippines in the Visayas** (UPV) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, and to cancel the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder(s).

10. **The University of the Philippines in the Visayas** (UPV) assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

11. Below is the address and contact persons/numbers of the BAC:

University of the Philippines in the Visayas
DR. CRISPINO A. SACLAUSO
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee
MS. ESTERLINA I. GAMEZ
Head, BAC Secretariat
New Administration Building, Miag-ao Campus
Telephone/Telefax No. (033) 315-8141, (033) 338-1535 local 180
E-mail: bac@upv.edu.ph

(Sgd.) DR. CRISPINO A. SACLAUSO
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Feb. 23, 2007)

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UK pullout seen sending more of Iraq into chaos

WASHINGTON—THE MAJOR drawdown of British troops from Iraq is not only dealing a political blow to the US administration from one of its staunchest allies, but also threatens to throw another part of Iraq into chaos, analysts warn.

Pentagon officials said the withdrawal of about a quarter of the 7,100-member British contingent in the coming months was unlikely to have an impact on the day-to-day operations of the US military.

But Nora Bensahel, a terrorism expert at the Rand Corp, a think tank with ties to the US Air Force, said that while violence in the south is at a manageable level, she expects the security situation to worsen when British troops leave.

"There certainly is no more slack in the US system to deploy more troops to the south were that seen to be necessary," she said.

"So if the level of violence does go up in the aftermath of the British withdrawal—and I think that is a very likely scenario—that could be very problematic for the US," she said.

Michael O'Hanlon, a military expert at the Brookings Institution, said a reduction in British forces in the south was an acceptable risk because the overwhelmingly Shiite region is less likely to tumble into chaos.

"I think the real concern here, and the reason why I am more unhappy than happy about the news of the day, is that, of course, what we really need is for some of those excess British forces to redeploy to Baghdad, not to go home," he said.

"And the reason they're not going to Baghdad has more to do with British politics than any sense that we have ample forces ourselves in central or northern Iraq.

"So what you're seeing is America's staunchest ally in this war losing its nerve or its political basis for sustaining the previous presence," he said.

Although relatively calm compared with Baghdad and Sunni areas to the north and west of the capital, Basra has been the scene of spurts of internecine violence among rival Shiite militias.

Last year, British forces launched operation Sinbad to purge security forces in Basra of militia control in preparation for the handover of security responsibilities.

But some analysts warn of factional fighting ahead as militia groups struggle for local supremacy in a region that is rich in oil and through which US military supply lines run.

"It really is going to be a test case for what it looks like when you take the lid off in the sense that the British troops have certainly been a deterrent of sort of open warfare in southern Iraq," said Justin Logan, a foreign policy analyst at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank.

Analysts also said the British announcement, coming as the US military is pouring more than 21,500 additional troops into Iraq to halt a slide toward civil war, was a political blow and a parting of ways between two close allies.

"The British see the end, see that it's not going to get any better," Logan said. "That is, we're not going to establish a more liberal, more secular, more democratic society.

"And the administration is still wedded to a more expansive vision, a more optimistic vision of what Iraq can be like," he said.

The British contingent in the south will fall to about 5,500 troops in the coming months, when it transfers control of the province of Maysan to Iraqis, and below 5,000 later in the year as it consolidates its forces in Basra.

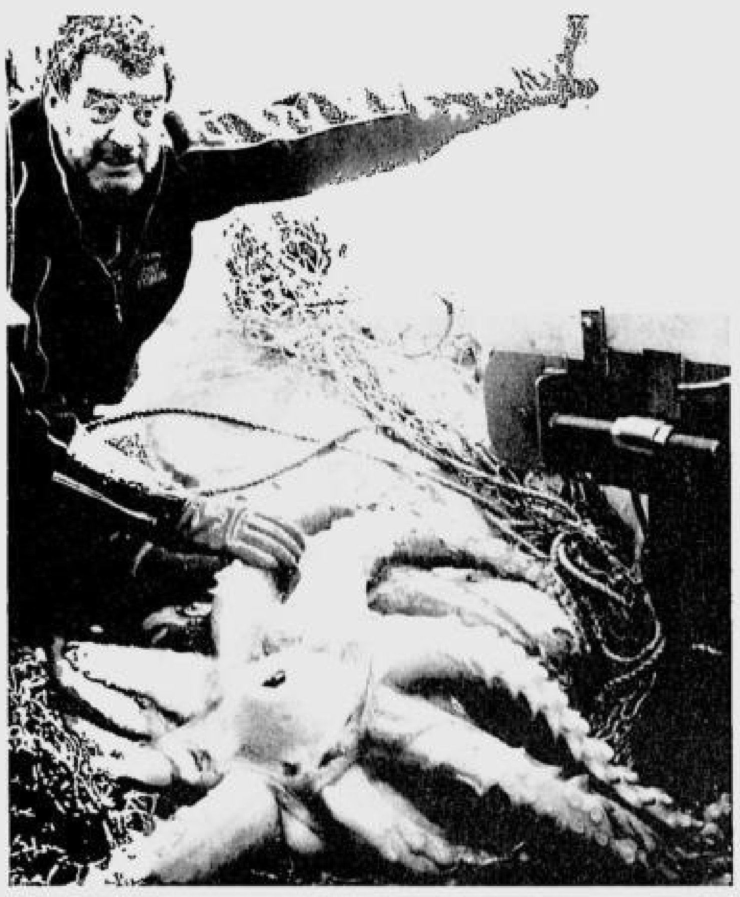
What is left of the British force will continue to guard the border with Iran, protect vital supply lines to Kuwait and train Iraqi security forces. It will stay in Basra into 2008.

Denmark also said it would withdraw its 450 troops, which fall under British command, in August.

In a television interview, Vice President Dick Cheney said the drawdown was "actually an affirmation that there are parts of Iraq where things are going pretty well." A Pentagon spokesperson said it had been planned for months, was well coordinated with the US military and the Iraqi government, and was unlikely to require US forces to shift into the south.

"These reductions are largely possible because of the successes that have been achieved in that region in transferring responsibility to Iraqi security forces," said Bryan Whitman. *AFP*

NZ fishermen land largest squid


NEW ZEALAND fisherman with the giant squid caught in early February 2007 in the Ross Sea, Antarctica. AP

WELLINGTON—A NEW Zealand fishing boat has landed what is believed to be a world record squid weighing 450 kg (990 pounds), officials said Thursday.

The gigantic sea creature is about 10 meters (33 feet) long and about 150 kg heavier than the next biggest specimen ever found.

Fisheries Minister Jim Anderton said the fishing boat was long lining in the Ross Sea near Antarctica and the squid was dining on a hooked toothfish when it was hauled from the deep.

"The crew stopped winching in the long-line for two hours, while the squid was maneuvered into a cargo net and hauled aboard. It was then stored safely in the hold," Anderton said.

It is believed to be the first intact adult male of the colossal squid (mesonychoteuthis hamiltoni) species to be successfully landed.

The squid has been frozen and will be preserved for scientific study. Anderton described the colossal squid as "as one of the most mysterious creatures in the deep ocean." *AFP*

World's most premature baby home

MIAMI—THE WORLD'S MOST premature living baby, born at 22 weeks, went home on Wednesday after spending four months at a Miami hospital.

"We are delighted," Sonja Taylor, the overjoyed mother, said as she left Miami's Baptist Children's hospital with her tiny girl doctors call a "miracle baby."

When she was born on Oct. 24 at 21 weeks and six days, Amillia weighed just 280 grams (10 ounces) and measured 24 centimeters (9.5 inches), slightly longer than a ballpoint pen. She was the world's fourth smallest baby on record.

"Even though she's only four pounds (1.8 kilos) now, she's plump to me," her mother said earlier this week.

No baby born at less than 23 weeks was previously known to have survived, according to the University of Iowa, which keeps a record of the world's tiniest babies.

The baby, conceived by in vitro fertilization, was delivered via C-section after attempts to delay a premature delivery failed. *AFP*

Iran can face wider sanctions after report

VIENNA—A UN WATCHDOG REport due on Thursday is likely to confirm Iran has escalated rather than halted its nuclear fuel program, exposing Tehran to wider sanctions over fears it is secretly seeking atom bombs.

As a 60-day grace period for it to stop enriching uranium expired on Wednesday, Iran offered to guarantee it was not pursuing nuclear weapons, but only as part of negotiations. It has refused to shelve the program as a precondition for talks.

"The Iranian nation defends its rights. The nuclear right is demanded by all Iranians and no one in the world can deprive the Iranian nation of its right," President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said in a speech in northwest Iran, ISNA news agency reported.

Defying terms set by six world powers for talks on trade incentives means the UN Security Council in coming weeks could weigh broadening the limited sanctions it imposed on Tehran in December.

Ahmadinejad does not have the final say in nuclear policy, but the highest authority, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has also said Iran will press ahead with work that Iranian officials insist is aimed at generating electricity.

"The Iranians have unfortunately not acceded to the international community's demands and we will have to consult.

We will have to decide how to move forward," US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in Berlin on Wednesday.

Rice, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana were to meet in Berlin on Thursday to discuss next steps on Iran.

The Security Council commissioned the International Atomic Energy Agency to report on whether Iran had heeded the deadline for it to mothball enrichment-related activity. *Reuters*

Nobel winner to run for G'mala president

GUATEMALA CITY—NOBEL Peace Prize laureate and indigenous leader Rigoberta Menchu on Wednesday announced she would be a candidate in Guatemala's Sept. 9 presidential election.

Menchu, 48, said that she would be a candidate for the center-left Encuentro por Guatemala (Encounter for Guatemala) party, a group that includes the Winaq, an indigenous political party she recently launched.

A Maya-Quiche activist who won the 1992 Nobel, she is best known for her work fighting for the rights of workers and her country's indigenous majority, especially during the Guatemala's bitter 1960-1996 civil war.

MENCHU AP

"We hope that the Guatemalan people see that we are a serious team that would give our word of honor to take the country forward," Menchu said as she made the announcement.

The daughter of native farmers, Menchu was educated in Catholic schools and launched into activism on behalf of women while still in her teens, according to her Nobel biography. *AFP*

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Ombudsman Building, Agham Road, North Triangle, Diliman, Quezon City
TELEFAX # 929-3759

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

BIDDING FOR *LOT 1:* FIFTEEN (15) UNITS BRAND NEW ASIAN UTILITY VEHICLES (AUV) AND/OR *LOT 2:* TWO (2) UNITS BRAND NEW MOTORCYCLES

The **OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**, through its continuing appropriation, intends to apply the sum of **TWELVE MILLION FOUR HUNDRED FORTY THOUSAND PESOS (Php 12,440,000.00)** for the Office of the Ombudsman ***Lot 1:* Fifteen (15) Units Brand New Asian Utility Vehicles (AUV)** and/or ***Lot 2:* Two (2) Units Brand New Motorcycles**, being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC). Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The **OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN** now invites sealed Bids from eligible bidders for the said requirement. Delivery of the goods/services is required within the period as prescribed in the bidding documents. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **ITB**.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **ITB**. The bidder/s with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. In case two (2) or more bidders tie in the financial proposals, and are eventually found to be equally post-qualified **"drawing of lots"** shall be resorted to as the tie-breaking method in accordance with GPPB Circular No. 06-2005. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lone **Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB)** determined after Post Qualification, or after the drawing of lots in case of tie.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN, inspect and/or purchase the Bidding Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Lot 1:* Twelve Thousand Pesos (Php 12,000.00)** and / or ***Lot 2:* One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00)** at the address given below beginning **March 7, 2007** from **8:00 a.m.** to **5:00 p.m.** daily.

The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or his authorized representative.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on **March 20, 2007** at **9:00 a.m.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check and in an amount not less than the amount provided hereunder:

FORM OF SECURITY	MINIMUM AMOUNT OF % OF ABC TO BE BID
1. Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank Draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1½%)
3. Surety Bond (GSIS only)	Two and a half percent (2½%)

SCHEDULE OF BIDDING ACTIVITIES

1.	Pre-bid Conference	- March 7, 2007 @ 10:00 AM BAC Secretariat, GSD Office of the Ombudsman Building, Q.C.
2.	Issuance of Bid and Eligibility Documents	- March 7, 2007 BAC Secretariat, GSD Office of the Ombudsman Building, Q.C.
3.	Deadline of submission of Eligibility Documents & Bids	- March 20, 2007 @ 9:00 AM BAC Secretariat, GSD Office of the Ombudsman Building, Q.C.
4.	Opening of Bids	- March 20, 2007 @ 10:00 AM BAC Secretariat, GSD Office of the Ombudsman Building, Q.C.

The **OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
2/F Ombudsman Bldg., Agham Road,
Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 926-9032 local 221 / 929-3759
Email: **cas@ombudsman.gov.ph**
Website: **www.ombudsman.gov.ph**

(Sgd.) **ROBERT L. KALLOS**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Feb 23, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE- INFRASTRUCTURE
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City
Tel. No. 255-6123; Fax No. 253-3981

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Province of Cebu, through its Bids and Awards Committee-Infrastructure (BAC-INFRA), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder contracts.

A. Buildings
General information
Title 2007 Construction of School Buildings
Scope Building construction
particulars

Package (Contract ID)	ABC PhP	Location	Plans and Bid Documents (PhP)
Package 1 PC-BC-07.03-1a to 1f	3,223,276.50	1st District, Mainland Cebu 1 Tubay National High School, Minglanilla, Cebu 2 Pataq Elementary School, Naga, Cebu 3 Cantao-an Elementary School, Naga, Cebu 4 Balud National High School, San Fernando, Cebu 5 Bolinawan Elementary School, Carcar, Cebu 6 Sibonga Central (DepED Sibonga), Sibonga, Cebu	3,000.00
Package 2 PC-BC-07.03-2a to 2q	10,450,057.07	2nd District, Mainland Cebu 1 Cambanua National High School, Argao, Cebu 2 Calenohan HS, Mantalongon NHS Extension, Dalaguete, Cebu 3 Dalaguete NHS Caliongan Extension, Dalaguete, Cebu 4 Pasol-Pugalo Elementary School, Alcoy, Cebu 5 Lunop Extension National High School, Boljoon, Cebu 6 Oslob-Pungtod Extension National High School, Oslob, Cebu 7 Samboan National High School, Samboan, Cebu 8 Salamanca National High School, Ginatilan, Cebu 9 Montañeza National High School, Malabuyoc, Cebu 10 Madridejos National High School, Alegria, Cebu 11 Moalboal National High School, Moalboal, Cebu 12 Bugho Elementary School, Moalboal, Cebu 13 Badian National High School, Badian, Cebu 14 Alcantara National High School Extension, Alcantara, Cebu 15 Ronda National High School, Ronda, Cebu 16 Dumanjug National High School, Dumanjug, Cebu 17 Cogon National High School, Dumanjug Cebu	5,000.00
Package 3 PC-BC-07.03-3a to 3j	7,094,619.22	3rd District, Mainland Cebu 1 Candugay Elementary School, Barili, Cebu 2 BM Panares National High School, Barili, Cebu 3 Mantalongon National High School, Barili, Cebu 4 Aloguinsan National High School, Aloguinsan, Cebu 5 Angilan Elementary School, Aloguinsan, Cebu 6 Anapog National High School, Pinamungajan, Cebu 7 Buanoy Main National High School, Balamban, Cebu 8 Nangka National High School, Balamban, Cebu 9 Santa Lucia National High School, Asturias, Cebu 10 Tuburan National High School, Tuburan, Cebu	4,000.00
Package 4 PC-BC-07.03-4a to 4f	3,050,024.71	4th District, Mainland Cebu 1. Daan Tabogon National High School, Tabogon, Cebu 2. Jovencio Masong National High School, Bogo, Cebu 3 Tapilon Central School, Tapilon, Daanbantayan, Cebu 4. Medellin National High School, Medellin, Cebu 5 San Remegio National High School, San Remegio, Cebu 6. Tabuelan National High School, Tabuelan, Cebu	3,000.00
Package 5 PC-BC-07.03-5a to 5g	4,911,659.46	5th & 6th Districts, Mainland Cebu 1 Dona Milagros National High School, Borbon, Cebu 2. Mohon National High School, Sogod, Cebu 3. Catmon National High School, Catmon, Cebu 4 Compostela National High School, Compostela, Cebu 5. Arcelo Pob. Ext. National High School, Liloan, Cebu 6. Arcelo National High School (Main), Liloan, Cebu 7. Consolacion Central School, Consolacion, Cebu 8. Cordova National High School, Cordova, Cebu 9. Kaorasan National High School, Carmen, Cebu	3,000.00
Package 6 PC-BC-07.03-6a to 6d	2,399,980.76	Bantayan Island 1 Santa Fe National High School, Sta. Fe, Bantayan Island, Cebu 2 Bantayan NHS-Atop-Atop Ext., Bantayan, Bantayan Is., Cebu 3 Bantayan NHS-Patao Extension, Bantayan, Bantayan Is., Cebu 4 San Agustin NHS, Madridejos, Bantayan, Bantayan Is., Cebu	3,000.00
Package 7 PC-BC-07.03-7a to 7c	1,709,985.57	Camotes Island 1 Lorenzo Tanza NHS, San Francisco, Camotes Island, Cebu 2 San Jose National High School, Poro, Camotes Island, Cebu 3 Tudela National High School, Tudela, Camotes Island, Cebu	3,000.00

B. Other Buildings

ABC (PhP)	Location	Plans and Bid Documents (PhP)
1,646,119.49	1 Proposed Covered Basketball Court, CCST-CA, Barili, Cebu	3,000.00
916,523.06	2. Proposed Health Center, Malapascua Island, Daanbantayan, Cebu	2,500.00

C. Roads

Project Number	ABC (PhP)	Location	Plans and Bid Documents (PhP)
Asphalting		Section 1	
PC-RA-07.04	56,024,666.04	1. Vegetable Highway, Argao-Sibonga, Cebu	20,000.00
PC-RA-07.05	37,461,426.86	2. Poblacion Agsuwao Road, Catmon, Cebu	10,000.00
PC-RA-07.06	15,067,588.84	3. Malin-ao Bunda-Bil-Cajel Road, Borbon, Cebu	5,000.00
PC-RA-07.07	8,130,981.80	4. Campanga-Mantayupan Road, Barili, Cebu	4,000.00
PC-RA-07.08	17,691,604.34	5. San Isidro-Cabatbatan, San Fernando, Cebu	5,000.00
PC-RA-07.09	9,596,292.02	6. Liloan-Pasil Coastal Road, Santander, Cebu	4,000.00
PC-RA-07.10	19,392,793.37	7. Poblacion-Guimbawean Road, Pinamungajan, Cebu	5,000.00
PC-RA-07.11	2,924,762.35	8. Basdiot Road, Moalboal, Cebu	3,000.00
Drainage		Section 2	
PC-DS-07.01	169,430.77	1. Drainage System (open canal), Sangat San Fernando, Cebu	2,000.00
PC-DS-07.02	1,089,866.33	2. Circumferential Road Rah. & Drainage Improvement, Mantalongon, Dalaguete, Cebu	3,000.00
Opening/ Improvement PC-RO1-07.01	6,588,036.48	Section 3 1. Alegria Kabangkalan-Tumogpa, Bangkito-Kan-an Road, Tuburan, Cebu	4,000.00

D. Construction of Waterworks System
General information :
Title : Proposed Level 3 Waterworks System
Scope : Installation of Level 3 Piped Waterworks System

Package (Contract ID)	ABC (PhP)	Location	Plans and Bid Documents (PhP)
PC-CWS3-07.07	390,478.86	Brgy. Sulsuan, Badian, Cebu	2,000.00
PC-CWS3-07.08	662,255.61	Brgy. Tubod, Badian, Cebu	2,500.00

The schedule of activities is as follows

	BAC-INFRA Activities	Schedule
1.	Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	February 22-28, 2007
2.	Issuance of Eligibility Forms	February 22-28, 2007
3.	Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	February 28, 2007
4.	Notice of Eligibility Check Results	March 2, 2007
5.	Issuance of Plans and Bid Documents	March 5, 2007
6.	Pre-bid Conference	March 7, 2007
7	Receipt and Opening of Bids	March 16, 2007

The BAC-INFRA Secretariat will issue to prospective bidder's Eligibility Forms at the Provincial Engineer's Office, Capitol Compound, Cebu City, upon their submission of a Letter of Intent stating and specifying therein which projects they intend to undertake, and payment of non refundable amount of Fifty Pesos (P50.00) for each project to the Cash Division. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to, and may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check from the aforementioned address. For further inquiries, one may call the Secretariat at (032) 255-6123.

The Secretariat will issue Bidding Documents including Plans and Specifications only to bidders declared by the BAC-INFRA who are found to be eligible to bid, upon payment to the Cash Division a non-refundable amount as above-stated.

The Province of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids and, reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding or not to award the contract.

(Sgd.) ADOLFO V. QUIROGA
Chairman

(PDI – February 23, 2007)

Dems race takes nasty turn as Clinton, Obama trade shots

CLINTON enjoying a model of the US Capitol Building presented to her Feb. 15. REUTERS

THE SUN WAS NOT YET UP WEDNESDAY, AND MEMBERS OF Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's campaign team were confronted with the kind of attack that most infuriates them: one questioning the character of Clinton and her husband.

To make matters worse, it came from David Geffen, the Hollywood producer who was once a big supporter of the Clintons but has since turned on them and is now backing Sen. Barack Obama for the Democratic presidential nomination.

What followed was a remarkably caustic exchange between the Clinton and Obama campaigns that highlighted the sensitivity in the Clinton camp to Obama's rapid rise as a rival and his positioning as a fresh face unburdened by the baggage borne by Clinton, the junior senator from New York. The Clinton camp seemed also to be sending a warning to mud-slinging critics that they would be dealt with fiercely.

It began with a column in The New York Times by Maureen Dowd, in which Geffen said the Clintons lie "with such ease, it's troubling" and that the Clinton political operation "is going to be very unpleasant and unattractive and effective." Geffen called Bill Clinton a "reckless guy" who had not changed in the last six years, and suggested that Hillary Clinton was too scripted.

In a statement it fired off at 9:46 a.m., the Clinton campaign called on Obama to sever his ties to Geffen and return the $1.3 million that Geffen helped raise at a reception in Beverly Hills on Tuesday.

Bill Burton, a spokesperson for Obama, responded with a statement less than an hour and a half later, saying it was "ironic that the Clintons had no problem with David Geffen" when he was "raising them $18 million and sleeping at their invitation in the Lincoln Bedroom."

The punch and counterpunch went on all day, transfixing the political world and overshadowing a gathering of all the Democratic candidates except Obama, the junior Illinois senator, at a union-sponsored forum in Nevada at which Hillary Clinton faced criticism from some opponents about her Iraq stance. *NYT*

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Smith burial seen urgent as her body decomposes

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA—The drawn-out court battle over what to do with Anna Nicole Smith's body has a new sense of urgency: the starlet's remains are decomposing more quickly than expected, and a public viewing could be in danger.

That warning from Broward County's medical examiner Tuesday came as Smith's boyfriend and her estranged mother fought over where to bury the former Playboy centerfold. Smith died Feb. 8, and her cause of death is under investigation.

The judge indicated Wednesday he was seeking a compromise to appease both parties.

"When you walked into the court, you hope to get everything," Circuit Judge Larry Seidlin said as the dispute marked a full week before him. "We will try to fashion a remedy where not everyone gets everything they want."

Also at issue in a California court is who fathered Smith's 5-month-old daughter, Dannielynn, who could inherit millions of dollars. Boyfriend Howard K. Stern is listed as the father on the birth certificate, but a photographer who once dated Smith says the girl is his.

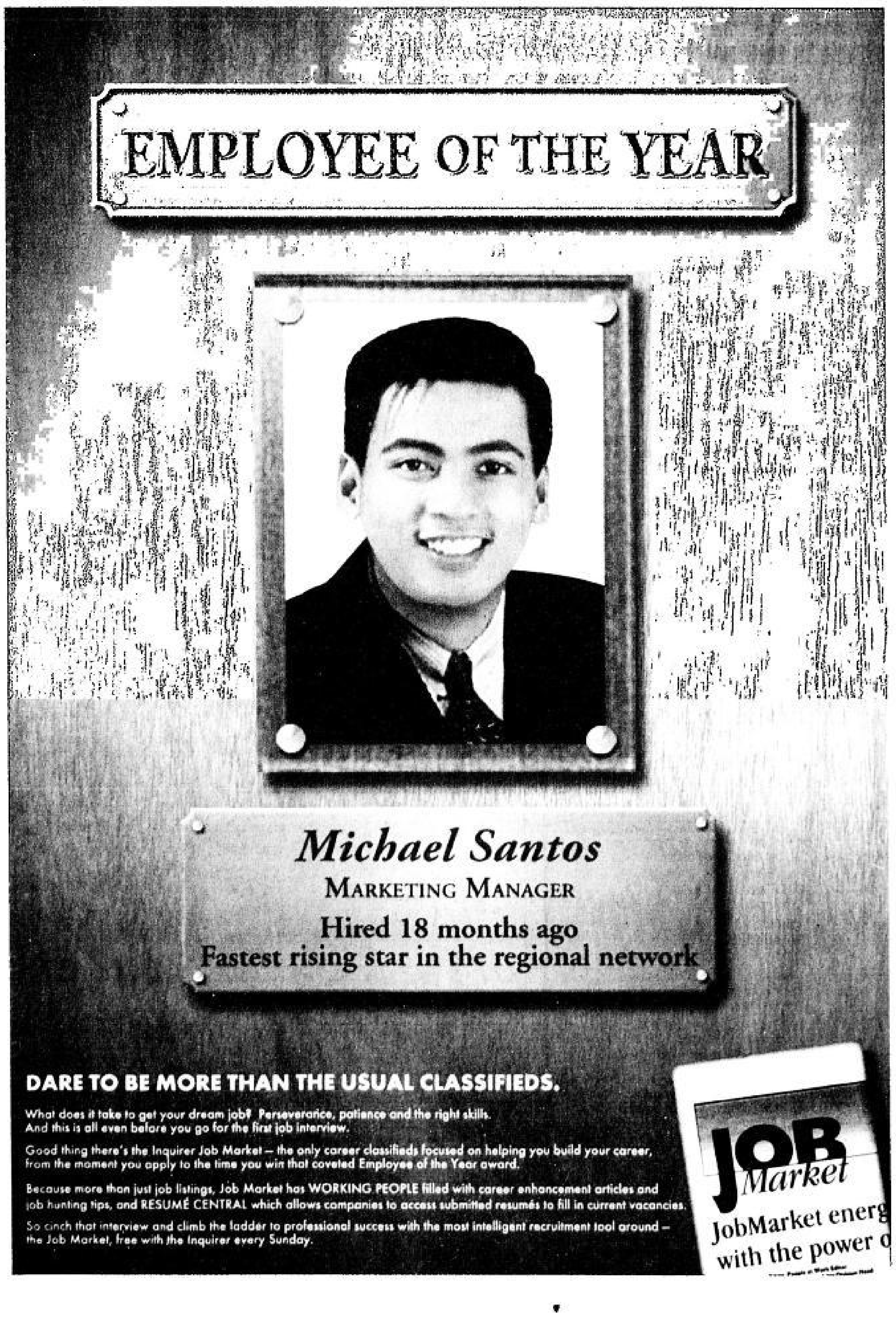
Stern wants Smith to be buried next to her son Daniel in the Bahamas, where he died from apparent drug-related causes last year. The mother, Virgie Arthur, wants Smith and her grandson buried back in Smith's native Texas, her attorney said.

Without written proof of Smith's wishes, Seidlin was forced to hear testimony from those who claim to know what she wanted.

In her second day on the stand, Arthur cried and testified that although she had not seen her daughter since about 1996, they spoke on the phone more frequently. *AP*

ENDURING ART FORM

Chinese acrobats perform a number during a show in Beijing Feb. 21. Acrobatics, dating back to more than 2,000 years, is one of China's oldest art forms. REUTERS



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DEFEATED AT THE SENATE

Italian Premier Prodi resigns after only 9 months in power

ITALY PM Romano Prodi REUTERS

ROME—ITALY'S PRESIDENT HOLDS CRISIS talks with political leaders on Thursday to see if Romano Prodi, who resigned as prime minister after nine months in power, can still head a government or must be replaced.

Prodi, who won the narrowest election in Italy's post-war history last year, quit on Wednesday after he was defeated in the Senate on foreign policy—a constant source of friction in his nine-party, Catholics-to-communists coalition.

"Comrades, all go home," crowed the headline in right-wing daily Il Giornale run by the brother of Silvio Berlusconi, the tycoon former prime minister who hopes to return to power if new elections are held.

Under the constitution, President Giorgio Napolitano now must find a way out of the impasse.

He will spend Thursday in consultations with party and parliamentary leaders—a process one newspaper called a "Russian roulette" for Prodi, as the unpredictable result will determine his political future.

There are three main scenarios.

If Napolitano finds enough support for Prodi among center-left parties, he could ask him to either form a new government or go to parliament with his present cabinet for a confidence vote; a victory would allow him to remain in office.

If support for Prodi is not strong enough for him to carry on as prime minister, Napolitano could ask someone else, possibly Interior Minister Giuliano Amato, to form a caretaker government of experts with cross-party backing.

If no agreement is found on who should be prime minister, Napolitano would be forced to dissolve parliament and call early elections, even though this option appears unlikely for now.

Analysts said any Prodi government would be extremely weak and vulnerable to bitter infighting among its allies, who disagree on just about everything from Italy's military missions abroad to gay rights.

"Even if there is another Prodi government it would be hanging by a thread and would not last long, as the reasons for tension abound," said Gianfranco Pasquino, political science professor at the Bologna center of John Hopkins University.

"The prime minister's tendering his resignation, even if not prompted by economic issues, confirms the validity of that scepticism," S&P said. It said the political crisis did not now effect its ratings.

Prodi, 67, was heading the 61st Italian government since 1945. After his election last April, he enjoyed a brief honeymoon but his popularity soon plummeted as he pushed through a deficit-cutting 2007 budget to bring Italy in line with European Union requirements.

Despite continued bickering within his coalition, his resignation on Wednesday came as a surprise.

The vote in the Senate was only intended as a motion of support for the government's foreign policy, but Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema turned it into a test on the executive's strength, giving Prodi little choice once the motion failed to pass.

Prodi only has a one-seat majority in the Senate, and the revolt of two leftist senators in his coalition was enough to put the government in a corner.

It was déjà vu for Prodi, whose last spell in power almost a decade ago was also cut short by far-left coalition allies. This time they rebelled over keeping Italian troops in Afghanistan and allowing the expansion of a US military base in Italy. *Reuters*

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In-form Rosales sets pace with 66

GERALD Rosales misses his putt on No. 10.

ROMY HOMILLADA

By Musong R. Castillo

STA. ROSA, LAGUNA—WITH CONDITIONS ideal and his confidence level at a high, Gerald Rosales attacked the pins with impunity yesterday and opened a one-shot lead in the Don Pocholo Razon Memorial tournament after a flawless four-under-par 66.

The 30-year-old Rosales, who finished second to Frankie Miñoza in the recent Philippine Open, birdied three of his first five holes in the front nine—his final nine—at

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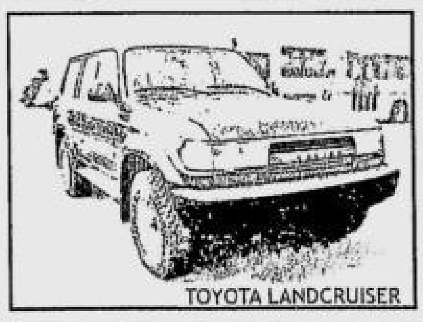

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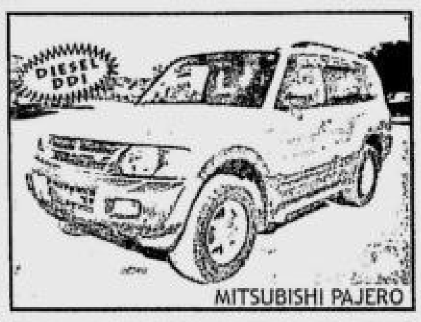

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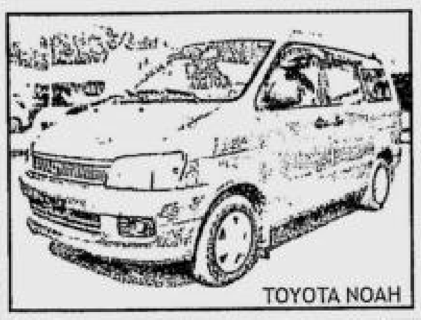

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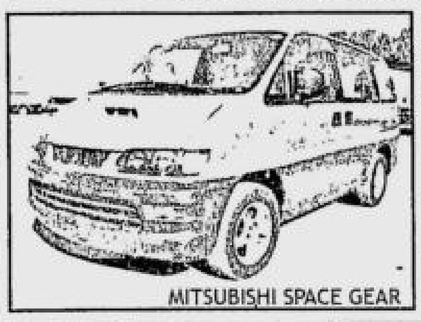

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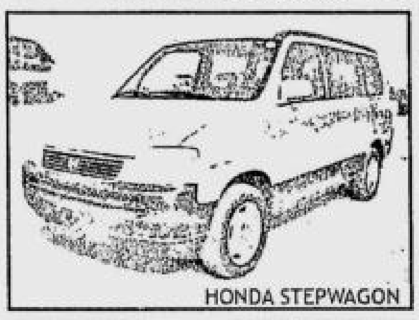

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Montiel, Gorres vow fight to the end

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

CEBU CITY—A FIGHT TO THE END.

Both WBO super flyweight king Fernando Montiel and Filipino challenger Z Gorres made this promise during the final press conference yesterday of the "Moment of Truth" card Saturday at the Cebu City Sports Complex.

The 24-year-old Nasipit-born, Mandaue-raised Gorres vowed to do his best come fight night, saying there will be no excuses as he had put in tremendous effort for the fight.

"I'm really ready for this fight," said Gorres in Filipino. "I did everything at the gym to attain prime condition."

The 27-year-old Montiel, who will be seeing action in his 12th world title bout, thanked the Filipino people for their warm hospitality.

"Thank you for the welcome," said Montiel, who came with his father-trainer and three brothers acting as his bodyguards. "We thought we would come across a hostile crowd. But we were wrong. This is like fighting at home. I would do my best. *Gracias*."

Golden Boy Promotions vice-president Eric Gomez, who described Montiel as the best 115-pound champion in the world, also credited Gorres as the best prospect hereabouts.

"We've got a great world title bout on Saturday night," said Gomez, who flew in yesterday from the United States. "It can be fought in the US, in Mexico, it can be fought here. No matter what happens, its going to be a great fight. The better man wins this Saturday night."

Promoter Sammy Gello-ani described this Saturday's event as the biggest in the history of Cebu boxing.

"The moment of truth is finally with us," he said. "I welcome everyone, especially those who flew several hours just to come. There were people who did not want to come to the Philippines because they heard some things, but when they came, they wanted to come every month.

"I am referring to the executives of the Golden Boy Promotions. These are the true gentlemen. Our partnership is not even one year, and now things are bearing fruits."

The official weigh-in takes place today at the Rajah Park Hotel. It will be supervised by Leon Panoncillo, the WBO vice-president for Asia Pacific.

WBO president Francisco "Paco" Valcarcel will also grace today's weigh-in and will watch tomorrow's fight on the invitation of Oscar De la Hoya and sportsman Antonio L. Aldeguer.

RP lobbying for inclusion of scratched SEAG events

By Marc Anthony Reyes

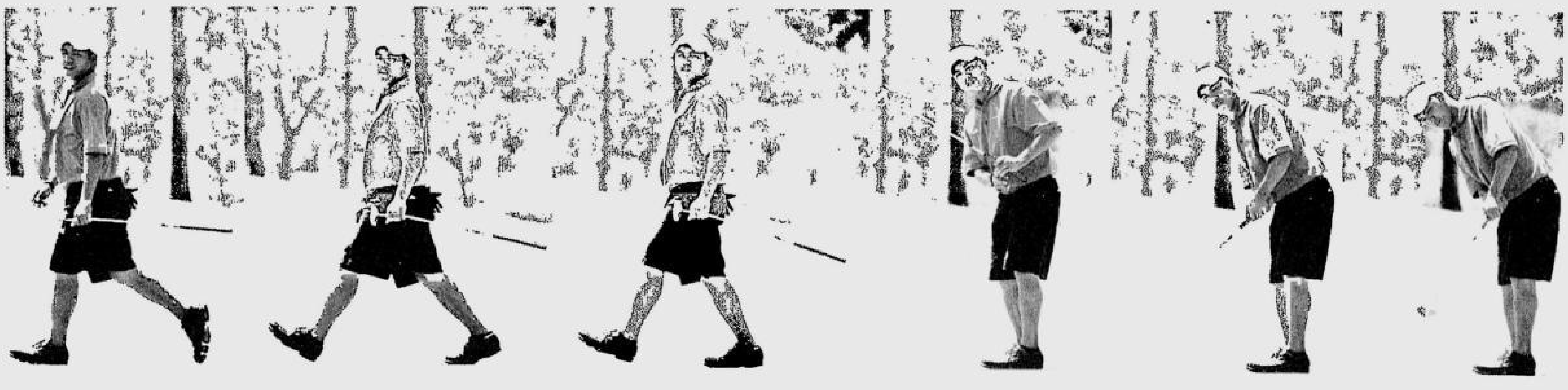
THE PHILIPPINES WILL LOBBY THE Southeast Asian Games Federation Council for the inclusion of certain events in several sports which have been stricken off the list for the Thailand Games in December.

Several events in diving, wushu, gymnastics and bodybuilding have been scratched by the Thai organizers, severely hurting the defending champion Filipinos' chances of matching their 113-gold harvest in the Manila SEAG two years ago.

SEA Games Task Force member Mark Joseph said that among those scratched was diving's one-meter springboard event where Filipinos won a gold and a silver in 2005.

"We will ask the NSAs (national sports associations) which sports disciplines or events they would want the POC to lobby before the Federation Council," said Joseph.

Wushu, which produced 11 golds for the Filipinos in 2005, took it in the chin after the Thai organizers shelved 10 events, while certain events in gymnastics, dancesports and dragonboat racing were also left out, according to Joseph.



CANLUBANG standout Jay Bayron strokes a long birdie putt (right) on the second hole of Pueblo de Oro and then tries to coax it in (fourth to sixth frame from the right). The ball lipped out of the cup. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

S'woods gains 2 on Canlubang

By Ernesto A. Gonzales

CAGAYAN DE ORO—MANILA SOUTHWOODS FOUGHT BACK WITH ITS A-TEAM yesterday but could only reduce defending champion Canlubang's lead to nine points after two rounds of the 60th Philippine Airlines Interclub golf tournament.

Doha Asian Games mainstay Gene Bondoc sparked Southwoods' rally with 35 points, veteran Jun Jun Plana backed him up with 34 and Asiad bronze medalist Michael Bibat and Erwin Vinluan put in 33 each as the Carmona, Cavite, squad gained two points on Canlubang, 135-133, at the Pueblo de Oro course here.

Canlubang, going for a record 14th title, actually produced a couple of 35s through reigning national champion Jay Bayron and 2004 RP Amateur champ Jun Bernis. Mario Labajo backed them with a 34.

But fourth man Boyet Saragoza managed only a 29, leaving Canlubang with a two-round total of 282. Southwoods, the 2005 champion, had 273.

With the third round set tomorrow at Del Monte, where they launched their campaign Wednesday with 149 points against Southwoods' 138, the shotmakers from Laguna looked forward to outplaying their counterparts by at least five points to boost their cause.

"*Kayod tayo bukas* (We have to work hard tomorrow)," said team captain Luigi Yulo, who has already decided on fielding 36-pointers Rufino Bayron and rookie Paul Echavez back at Del Monte. "If we get at least five points, we're okay."

The same five-point margin is the target of Southwoods tomorrow according to skipper Thirdy Escano "to give my boys a fighting chance in the final round," which will be staged at Pueblo.

Co-host Del Monte, the 2004 winner, produced the day's top scorer in the championship division in Joel Opaco, who eagled the par-5 seventh to wind up with 36 points.

But the Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon, team could only total 131 to fall behind by five at 268 behind Southwoods.

Bibat, the last man up for Southwoods, and Plana had a chance to slice Canlubang's lead further but both bogeyed the last hole—Bibat on a three-putt miscue and Plana after failing to get up and down after missing the green.

But Bayron and Bernis also had troubles of their own.

Jay, the Philippine Open low amateur early this month, was 1-under at the turn but had a pick-up on his 10th hole and a bogey on the short par-5 16th after driving into the hazard on the right. He needed a six-foot birdie on the 18th to finish with a medal score of 1-over 73.

Bernis was red-hot from tee to green but blew five putts inside eight feet and missed a 10-foot eagle putt on the 16th.

Cebu Country Club, with former jungolfer Mark Anthony Dy accounting for a tournament-high 40 points at Del Monte, forged a tie for the Founders lead with Orchard at 242. Wack Wack was third with 236.

Valley kept its lead in the Sportswriters class with 237 even as Maharlika all but clinched the Friendship crown by opening a 33-point lead over Stanford, 203-170.

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Century Park Hotel, C-Lium Fibre, Foreign Post, Lufthansa Technik, What's On Expat Communications are the minor sponsors.

The second-round scores:

CHAMPIONSHIP—Canlubang 282 (149-133); Manila Southwoods 273 (138-135); Del Monte 268 (137-131); Riviera 201 (97-104); Fil-Am Hawaii 189 (112-77); Saranggani 184 (80-104); Tagaytay 181 (88-93); Pinoy Vancouver 171 (94-77); SFO Heritage 160 (89-71); Fil-Oz Sydney 154 (85-69); Shanghai 152 (80-72); Club Filipino 141 (75-66); Bay Area 139 (74-65); Moffet Fields 120 (69-51); Fil-Am Fairfield 118 (60-58); EZ Par 100 (50-50); Las Vegas 100 (60-40); Washington 87 (50-37)

FOUNDERS—Cebu Country Club 242 (109-133); Orchard 242 (20-122); Wack Wack 236 (116-120); Negros 228 (109-119); Pueblo de Oro 227 (108-119); Forest Hills 216 (101-115); Sherwood Hills 198 (92-106); Rancho Palos Verdes 196 (87-109); Sta. Elena 189 (102-87)

SPORTSWRITERS—Valley 237 (122-115); Villamor 229 (105-124); Mactan Coral 212 (99-113); Camp Evangelista 208 (97-111); Lanang 206 (94-112); Alta Vista 204 (94-110); Iligan 204 (95-109); Alabang 204 (94-110); Iloilo 202 (109-93); Phil. Navy 196 (95-101); Camp John Hay 194 (100-94); Paoay 184 (93-91); Davao 179 (79-100); Zamboanga 175 (77-98); Green Hills West 174 (86-88); Apo 168 (86-82); Green Tee Club 164 (78-86); Team LA 151 (65-86); Lumbia 150 (65-85); Pittsburg 127 (51-76); San Juanico 126 (66-60); Victorias 120 (49-71); Brotherhood Sharp 111 (39-72); Riyadh Dirab 103 (48-55)

FRIENDSHIP—Maharlika 203 (112-91); Stanford 170 (90-80); IAGC San Diego 166 (90-76); UP Tee Jots 161 (88-73); Fil-Am Florida 156 (81-75); Guinhalaran 147 (85-62); Crystal Springs 145 (79-66); PGA British Columbia 142 (56-86); South Cotabato 132 (67-65); Australasian Melbourne 127 (78-49); Bacolod 124 (73-51); Paga San Jose 122 (71-51); Sky West 120 (63-57); Mt. Malindang 118 (73-45); Seattle 104 (56-48); Cotabato 101 (58-43); Riyadh FGA 79 (36-43); Mountain Shadows 77 (40-37); Mabuhay SFO 76 (46-30).

Banal: I did not resign, I don't want to leave Lions

By Jasmine W. Payo

MULTITITLED MENTOR KOY BANAL YESterday admitted that a "disagreement on principles" has put his San Beda coaching job on the line.

"I received a text message from the group running the basketball program that it's time to part ways," Banal told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"I did not come to an agreement on some principles with the group running the basketball program. They feel I need to focus. I'm trying to convince the group that I can still do the job."

Talk is rife about the impending dismissal of Banal, who steered the Red Lions to the end of a 28-year NCAA title drought last year. His concurrent tenure as head coach of Magnolia in the PBL and as assistant coach of Purefoods in the PBA has been cited as one of the reasons.

"I don't mind having three teams," said Banal. "I have the energy. I can put my mind and heart into it."

Banal noted that his coaching contract with San Beda will end in May.

"I'm just waiting for the decision, or a letter from San Beda," he said. "It (the dismissal) is not yet official. I did not resign, I don't want to resign. I love San Beda. There are many people from this school I look up to. I just want to return to San Beda what they taught me."

Banal admitted that it would be difficult for him to give up his coaching job at either Magnolia or Purefoods, two of several basketball teams run by San Miguel Corp. in the amateur and professional leagues.

"Before San Beda took me in two years ago, they knew that I was loyal to San Miguel," he said. "I asked San Miguel's permission, and they agreed that I can help my alma mater."

Banal joined the Lions mid-season of 2005. Last year, he guided the Lions to two championships in five Finals appearances in different collegiate leagues, including the NCAA.

"If they think I cannot do the job, that's their prerogative," Banal said. "It only gave me extra motivation to coach. But my point is, I did not turn my back on San Beda. I still want to serve my school in whatever way."

KOY BANAL: Disagreement ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Edsa rites feature San Beda-UST cage duel

ATHLETES WILL COMMEMORATE THE VICtory of People Power on Edsa in February 1986 with a hardcourt showdown between college hoops' best in the "Unity in Sports" event at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium on Sunday.

NCAA champs San Beda Red Lions will battle the UAAP titlists Santo Tomas Growling Tigers, while two squads featuring movie actors collide as one of the event's sidelights.

"Sports can be a good vehicle for the advancement of unity," said Commissioner Christopher L. Carrion, overall chair of the 21st Anniversary Celebration of Edsa People Power Commission and Spirit of Edsa Foundation Inc.

Major sponsors of the event are PLDT, Smart and Burger King under telecommunications tycoon Manny V. Pangilinan, president of the BAP-Samahang Basketball ng Pilipinas.

Also gracing the affair are Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez and BAP-SBP project director Fritz Gaston.

Pangilinan and Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita will be the keynote speakers in the 3 p.m. opening ceremony. Admission is free.

The event will also feature taekwondo, sepak takraw, cheerleading and dancesport exhibitions.

Nigerian center Sam Ekwe and Yousif Aljamal will speahead the Red Lions, while pacing the Tigers are Jojo Duncil and Jervy Cruz.

Suiting up for the Red Team in the celebrity match are playing coach Philip Salvador, Jestoni Alarcon, Onyok Velasco, Jordan Herrera, Gean Padilla, Ian Veneracion, Joko Diaz, Jimwell Stevens, Ace Espinosa and Jason Abalos.

The White Team will be led by playing-coach Tirso Cruz III, Christopher de Leon, James Blanco, Mark Fernandez, Bayani Agbayani, Zoren Legaspi, Carlos Morales, Jay Manalo, Emilio Garcia and Rayver Cruz.

Each squad will have two former PBA stars as reinforcements.

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SPORTSWATCH

Asian BMX Pro Jam at Westgate

URGE MEDIA GROUP AND RED HORSE "EXTRA STRONG" BEER WILL start its yearly Extreme Sports and Music event with even more adrenaline rush this 2007. Dubbed as the Red Horse Beer-Urge Asian BMX Pro Jam, the event will feature Asia's Pro BMX Stunt talents from Malaysia and the Philippines. They will be led by Southeast Asia's No. 1 BMX stunt pro rider Armand "The Man" Mariano, who will be showing daredevil stunts and technical tricks alongside his Malaysian counterparts. The event will be on March 3, starting at 1 p.m. at the Westgate, Automall Parking Area, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Call (632) 889-5914 or email urge_mag@yahoo.com.

Jaworski, Coo head Scoop guests

FORMER SENATOR ROBERT JAWORSKI, PHILIPPINE BOWLING Congress secretary general Bong Coo and executive vice president Jaime Dychangco and national bowler Biboy Rivera are gracing today's SCOOP Forum at the Kamayan Restaurant in Padre Faura. Jaworski is expected to discuss Air 21's interest to get him as head coach while Coo and Dychangco will talk about the preparation of the national bowling team for the Southeast Asian Games. Rivera will give an update on his training for the World Championships. The weekly session, aired live over DZSR Sports Radio and supported by Accel and Teletech, begins at 10:30 a.m.

Bigtime cockfest at Pasay today

AN EXCITING DUEL AMONG NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COCKFIGHT champions happens today at Pasay City Cockpit as the Labanan 5-cock derby fires off at 3 p.m. with 90 fights on tap. Competitors include sabong idol Patrick Antonio, fresh from bagging the 2007 World Slasher Cup and SJC International Derby, Gov. Ito Ynares, Jun Santiago, NCA International Derby winner Rep. Iggy Arroyo and Jesry Palmares. Boxing hero Manny Pacquiao, champion in last week's 2M Davao 7-cock derby, will also field an entry along with partners Wakee Salud and Nelson Salvanera.

Rizal breeders group formed

FINALLY, THE FORMATION OF THE RIZAL GAMEFOWL Breeders Association (RGBA) was finalized on Feb. 16. Interim president Joey Sy heads the association along with vice president Charlie Cruz, secretary Donato Clemente, treasurer Peping Chan and business manager TJ Marquez. Present during the organizational meeting and representing the National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders (NFGB) were Pit Games Inc. president Manny Berbano and LJ Sumulong of Antipolo. "With the imminent inclusion of RGBA to the NFGB, the breeders from Rizal will be a force to reckon with in the future," said Berbano. RGBA members and NFGB officials will have another meeting at 6 p.m. today at Mr. G Restaurant, Lores Mall, Antipolo City.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Condoleeza (7), Gundam (1), Military Might (1), Que Fresca (8)

Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Queen Abbey (5), Unleashed (1), Ingay Ingay (6), Virgin Island (3)

Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Bilingaling (4), Pride and Joy (2), Penny Wise (6), Hazmagic (5)

Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—McDollar/Kapamilya (9), Green Gold/Sharp Thunder (3), Southern Zone (8), Kate's Princess (5), Just Relax (4)

Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Great Emma (3), Feverishly (4), Imminent Star/Earl Gray (2), Please Do (5)

Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Silver Eagle (1), Real Material (7), Brazen Truth/Magic Bullet (8), Jajie (4), Epic Energy (2)

Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Cebuana Spell (1), Kalmia (8), Mindpower Miss (4), Complexion/Dualargo (5), On the Fairway (6)

Race 8—(Qrt/Tri/Penta)—From This Moment (4), Gold Money (5), Joint Account (7), Friendly Fire (9), Step On The Gas (2)

Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Simply Gold (9), Golden Touch (8), I Miss You (11), Dona Gelay (4), Remus (3), Sir Benjo (5)

BAP-SBP open to all-pro team

By June Navarro

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE the competition.

The leadership of the BAP-Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas and the Philippine Olympic Committee yesterday said they are open to fielding an all-professional squad in the tournaments leading to the Olympics.

BAP-SBP president Manny V. Pangilinan and POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco were on the same boat as far as the formation of the national team for the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championships is concerned, pointing out the dangers of overconfidence.

"Our Southeast Asian neighbors are moving heaven and earth to improve and beat us, so we should not take them for granted," said Cojuangco.

"They are all-out when it comes to funding their respective national basketball teams," added the former Tarlac congressman who is considering running again for a seat in the House of Representatives in his district.

After announcing the lifting of the Fiba suspension Wednesday night, Pangilinan batted for a team made up of PBA stars even in low-caliber tournaments such as the Seaba.

"I'll stick my neck out," said Pangilinan. "I've expressed my views to them (selection committee) that the Philippines is participating internationally for the first time in a long while."

"It will also remove any item of uncertainty that we may not win, because you cannot discount the fact that other Asean nations are probably beefing up their own national teams. So, why take the chance?" added the PLDT big boss.

Headed by PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad, the five-man selection committee decided earlier this week that a composite team of amateurs and professionals will be fielded to the Seaba meet.

The committee also indicated that national coach Chot Reyes would be the head of the coaching staff, but would relegate the coaching chores to one of his assistants.

"The selection committee has its own prerogative, so I think we have to check and work it out what really is the best solution," said Pangilinan.

Despite the stalemate, the PBA proceeded with the formation of the team and will name the members of the squad on Saturday.

PBA commissioner Noli Eala has instructed Reyes to come up with the final lineup not later than today.

"Almost all the players that Chot has talked with have shown full cooperation and desire to play for the team," said Eala.

"In fact, some of the players not interviewed are even asking if they have a place in the team," he added.

Eala said training for the national dribblers would begin on March 5, a day after the second conference of the PBA had kicked off. The chosen players will be pulled out their respective PBA teams to concentrate on the national team.

7 int'l meets up for RP dribblers

CHOT Reyes

SEVEN INTERNATIONAL stints are in the calendar of the PBA-powered national team before it plunges into action in the Fiba-Asia championships.

The Nationals will begin their tour of duty in Jakarta, Indonesia, on April 9-14 for the qualifying of the Fiba-Asia Champions Cup. Expected to easily hurdle the opposition, the Nationals will go next to Iran where the Fiba-Asia Champions Cup tournament proper is scheduled on May 12-20.

In between, national coach Chot Reyes' team will fly to Australia for a series of goodwill games before embarking on a European tour in June.

The Southeast Asia Basketball Association championships, the region's qualifying for the Fiba-Asia championships, is tentatively set in Bangkok on May 24-28.

In July, an invitational in Lebanon and a four-country tilt in Manila are being prepared for the squad's final tune-up for the Fiba-Asia in Tokushima, Japan, from July 28-Aug.5.

The RP five will also play in Lebanon for tune-up games against Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Lebanon. A week before the Fiba-Asia, the PBA will organize friendly matches against teams from China, Chinese-Taipei and South Korea or Japan. ***June Navarro***

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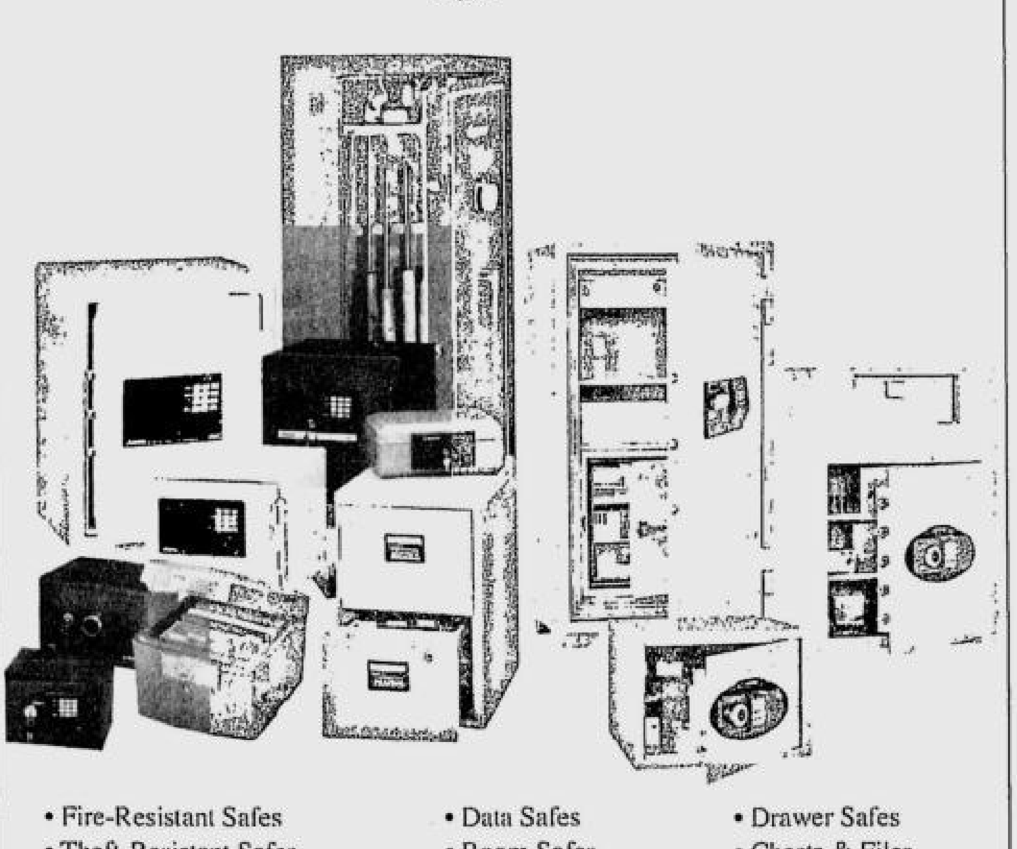

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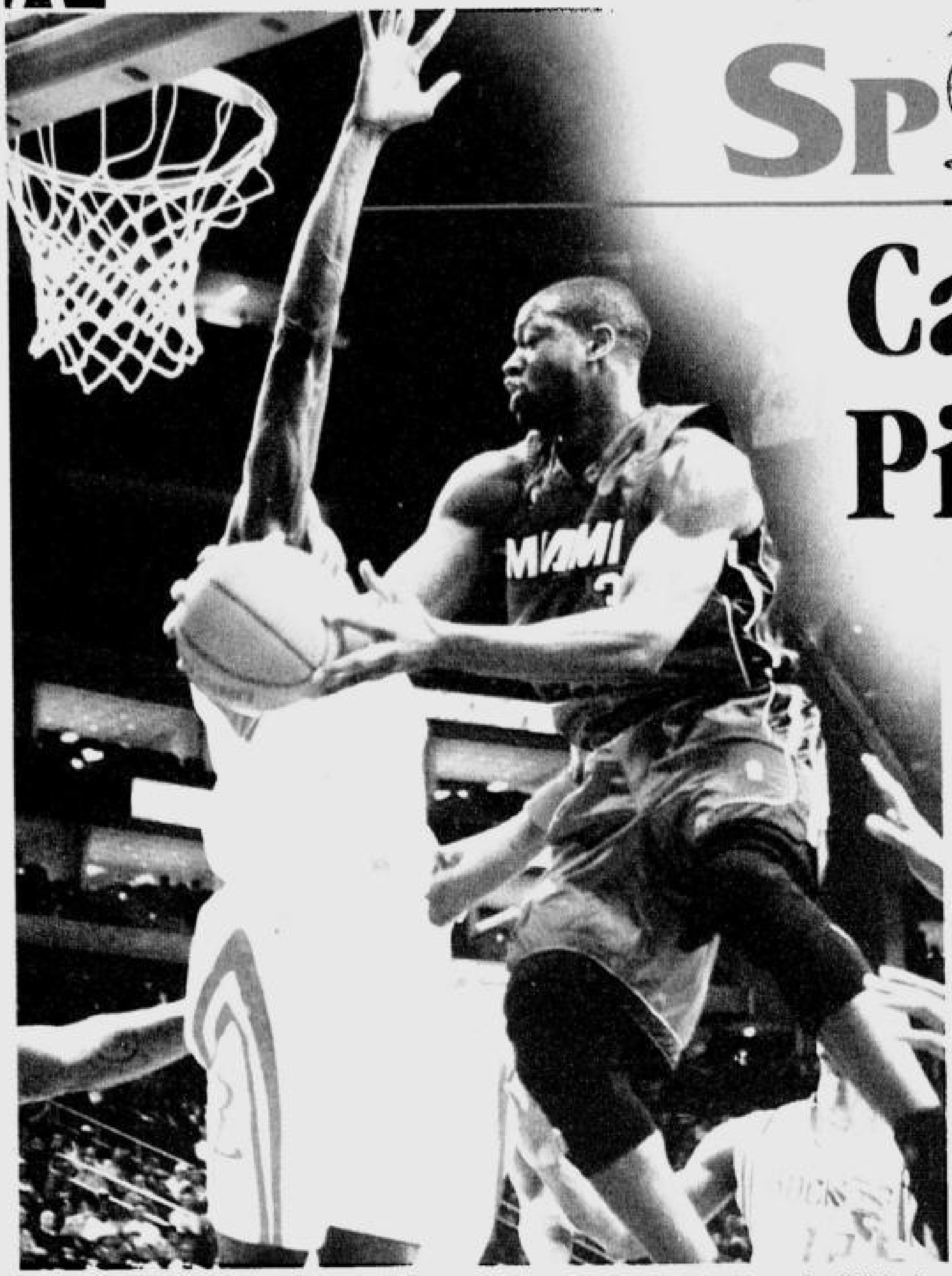
SPORTS



THE HEAT'S Dwayne Wade (3) makes a pass around Rockets' Dikembe Mutombo (55) in the first half of their NBA game Wednesday in Houston. AP

Cavs down Raptors; Pistons repel Magic

TORONTO—THE CLEVELAND CAValiers enjoyed a winning return to action after the All-Star break, edging the in-form Toronto Raptors, 86-85, on Wednesday led by LeBron James' game-high 29 points.

James, who said before the game that it was his responsibility to guide the Cavaliers into the playoffs, had a lackluster 10-point first half before sparking a 15-3 third quarter run that put the Cavaliers in front, 59-51.

The Raptors battled back to lead 83-80 with four minutes remaining, but James kept them in touch with a pair of baskets to leave the Cavaliers (32-22) trailing by one point going into the final seconds.

Anderson Varejao then stepped up to finish off the Raptors, the big Brazilian dunking teammate Sasha Pavlovic's missed shot with 16 seconds left on the clock to complete the scoring.

Varejao contributed 16 points and 15 rebounds to the win while Larry Hughes chipped in with 14.

"As the leader, I can't allow us to have a mental hurdle. We've got less than 30 games to the playoffs and I can't allow that," James told reporters. "That (the playoffs) is the only reason I play this game."

With eight wins in their last 10 contests, the Atlantic division leading Raptors (29-35) emerged from the All-Star break as one of the hottest teams in the NBA with only the Dallas Mavericks (9-1) posting a better record over the same stretch.

The Raptors also entered the game unbeaten in their last eight at home, one short of the single-season franchise record of nine set in 1999.

Chris Bosh continued to show the way for the Raptors, nailing 24 points and grabbing 10 rebounds while number one draft pick Andrea Bargnani scored 18 points off the bench.

"He (James) is their main go-to guy and he turned it on in the second half," Bosh said.

"We tried to get it out of his (James) hands and make the rest of his team make plays, but he made the right passes and they squeaked by us."

Vince Carter had a season-high 46 points but he was unable to prevent the New Orleans Hornets from beating his New Jersey Nets, 111-107. Carter has been the subject of numerous trade rumors as Thursday's deadline approaches.

The Detroit Pistons won for the ninth time in 10 games, downing the Orlando Magic, 110-88.

Manu Ginobili scored a season-high 40 points, including 24 straight points for his team in the first half, to lead the San Antonio Spurs past the Atlanta Hawks, 103-96. San Antonio has won four straight.

Kyle Korver tied a career-high with 31 points as the Philadelphia 76ers beat the New York Knicks, 104-84.

Jermaine O'Neal had 29 points and 15 rebounds as the Indiana Pacers outlasted the Milwaukee Bucks, 136-129, in double overtime. *Reuters*

NBA on TV today

8 a.m.—Sacramento versus Washington (replays at 4 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.)

Woods advances as Els stumbles

TUCSON, ARIZONA—TIGER Woods kept his bid for an eighth-straight US PGA Tour victory on track Wednesday with a first-round victory over J.J. Henry in the Accenture Match Play Championship.

World No. 1 Woods defeated Henry 3 and 2 to advance to a second-round clash with South African Tim Clark in the eight million-dollar World Golf Championships event.

Phil Mickelson and Jim Furyk, like Woods the top seeds in their sections of the draw, both advanced.

But Shaun Micheel lived up to his reputation as a match play upset artist as he ousted Adam Scott, the top seed in the Snead quarter and third seed overall, in 21 holes.

Micheel, the 2003 US PGA Champion, made headlines last September when he beat Woods in the first round of the World Matchplay Championship at Wentworth.

South Africa's Ernie Els, a two-time US Open champion, was also among the big names making an early exit on Wednesday.

Bradley Dredge, the unheralded 60th seed from Wales, posted an emphatic 4 and 2 victory over Els in a match that offered little in the way of drama.

In the next round, Dredge will face England's Ian Poulter, who beat American Bart Bryant 5 and 4.

Ireland's Padraig Harrington drained a 40-foot eagle at the first extra hole to defeat European Ryder Cup teammate Lee Westwood of England.

Other winners from the 19-strong European continent included England's Luke Donald, Justin Rose and Paul Casey, Scotland's Colin Montgomerie, Sweden's Henrik Stenson and Niclas Fasthand Spaniards Jose Maria Olazabal and Sergio Garcia.

Rose beat New Zealand's Michael Campbell 6 and 5 to book a clash with Mickelson, who beat Australian Richard Green 1-up. Mickelson got the win when Green missed his 20-foot birdie try at the 18th. *AFP*

Madrigal powers team to 1-2-3 finish

KARTING PRINCESS ALESSANdra Madrigal once again displayed maturity beyond her years when she topped the time trials, pre-final and final of the premier Formula 125 category—a combination of the F125, Rotax SR and ROK classes—during the Sorteo Grand Prix held at the Carmona Circuit Philippines in Cavite on Feb. 17.

The 11-year-old Madrigal turned back more experienced rivals that included two-time Karter of the Year Matteo Guidicelli, World Rotax Max Championship veteran Marlon Stockinger, as well as European Championship campaigners Mark Bumgarner and Stefano Marcelo.

In qualifying, Madrigal, who is mentored by former world karting champion Terry Fullerton of the UK, timed 43.881 seconds—the only sub-44-second effort—to break the previous track record of 43.963 seconds set by Guidicelli last year.

Madrigal put the hammer down during the 15-lap pre-final wherein she took a wire-to-wire victory to secure pole position for the final. She also submitted a 44.027—the fastest lap of the race.

The final saw her execute a flawless rolling start that allowed her to take the lead at the first corner, pull away from the jostling field behind her and take the checkered flag 20 laps later, eight seconds ahead of Marcelo and nine seconds ahead of Bumgarner.

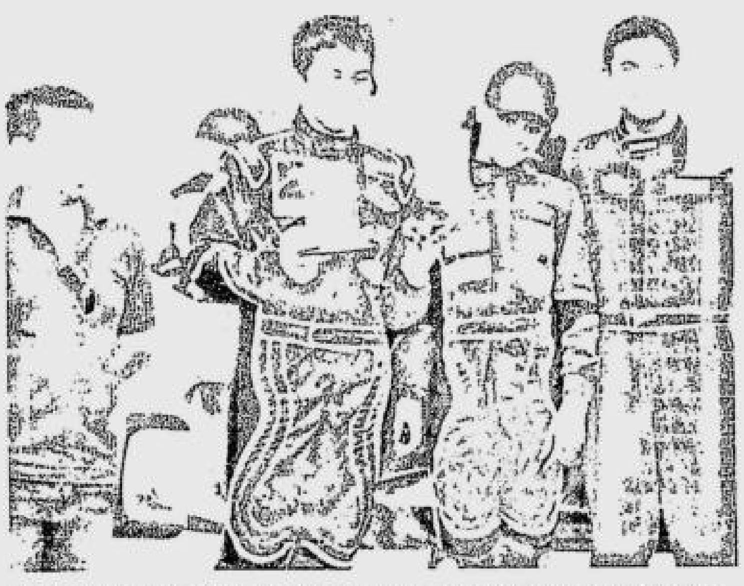
During the mandatory post race weigh-in, however, Marcelo was found .6 kg below the minimum weight limit and was disqualified, thereby promoting Bumgarner to second and Stockinger to third.

Much to the jubilation of the paddock, Madrigal also led the Alessandra Racing Team to a remarkable 1-2-3 finish in the Rotax SR class. She was followed by Bumgarner and Oliver Aquino, respectively.

Fellow Alessandra Racing driver Guidicelli did not figure on the podium as he was beset with handling problems all day and was forced to drive conservatively.

Madrigal's triumph in the Sorteo Grand Prix is her second in three races since the Philippine karting season began. She also won the Rotax Mojo Max Tune-Up Race, which was held three weekends ago.

The team will next see action in the second round of the Rotax Mojo Max Challenge on Sunday at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.



SORTEO Grand Prix organizer Johnny Tan and Alessandra Racing Team's Mark Bumgarner, Alessandra Madrigal and Oliver Aquino.

In-form Rosales sets pace with 66

From page A23

The Country Club here to hold off Elmer Salvador, who had a 67.

His courageous iron play got him close to the cups and he actually flirted with the course-record 64 but muffed at least three birdie chances from within seven feet.

"I hit the ball well and those short putts made it a lot easier—the greens were very hard to read," Rosales, also the RP Open champ in 2000 at The Riviera, said after his 32-34 round. "It was a good start."

Miñoza, the Asian Tour's Order of Merit leader, did not get that luxury, though.

Coming off a joint second-place finish in Indonesia a week after his second RP Open romp, the 47-year-old former greenskeeper's son from Bukidnon fired a 71 despite a bogey-bogey start.

Miñoza three-putted his opening hole—also the 10th—before missing the par-3 11th green twice for another bogey.

Running third was 2005 winner Jherome Delariarte, who checked in with a 68, one shot in front of Angelo Que and 1990 RP Open and Masters champion Robert Pactolerin.

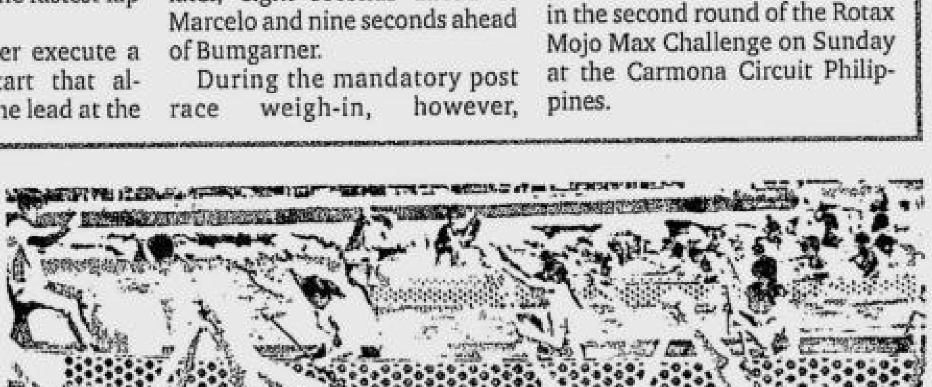
Only five players turned in sub-par scores, with Artemio Murakami, Cookie La'O and amateur Mia Piccio checking in with level 70s to be four off the pace.

Tony Lascuña, who won this event in 2004, was with Miñoza's group. With them were Benjie Magada, Mars Pucay and Junior World champion Cyna Rodriguez.

Defending champion Juvic Pagunsan, meanwhile, withdrew at the last minute due to a bad shoulder.

The first round scores:

66—G. Rosales; 67—E. Salvador; 68—J. Delariarte; 69—R. Pactolerin, A. Que; 70—C. La'O, A. Murakami, M. Piccio; 71—F. Miñoza, C. Rodriguez, T. Lascuña, B. Magada, M. Pucay; 72—P. Miñoza, R. Sinfuego, R. Sasutil, E. Sanchez; 73—D. Zarate, C. Casas, M. Dumandan; 74—D. Ardina (A), M. Dizon, L. Dacudao; 75—R. Bisera, J. Pagunsan, R. Alit, G. Bunyi (A), D. Bisierra (A); 76—C. Villaroman, E. Estrera, C. Superal (A); 77—R. Miñoza, R. Pagunsan, A. Balan; 78—E. Bagtas.



DRAGON BOAT RACE: Competitors of the First Drago Cup paddle furiously at the Manila Bay. The Philippine National Police (PNP) Rowing Teams A and B stage a 1-2 finish in the men's division but Aqua Fortis upstages the PNP in the women's division. In the elite division, the Women's National Team emerges champion.

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Liverpool rallies to nip Barcelona

LONDON—LIVERPOOL CAME FROM BEHIND to win 2-1 at defending champion Barcelona on Wednesday while runaway Italian leader Inter Milan was held 2-2 by another Spanish club, Valencia, in the European Champions League.

Jose Mourinho's Chelsea held his former club, FC Porto, to a 1-1 draw, and Lyon—on course for a sixth consecutive French league title—was held 0-0 at AS Roma.

In a matchup of the last two winners of European soccer's most prestigious competition, Craig Bellamy scored one goal and set up the second for John Arne Riise at Barcelona's Camp Nou after Deco had given the home team a 14th-minute lead.

The goals for Bellamy and Riise came less than a week after reports that the Welsh striker hit the Norwegian defender on the legs with a golf club after a drinking binge at a Portuguese hotel. *AP*

KOTR registry opens

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN for the Metro Manila Adidas King of the Road Race on March 11 at the ground floor of Vasquez Madrigal Bldg., 51 Annapolis St. in Greenhills. Entry fee is P250.

It will end when the 2,500 singlets have all been issued. Open for competition is the 10K KOTR race and a side event in the 3K run for kids.

This year, Adidas Philippines is bringing its annual King of the Road race to a higher level with the staging of simultaneous races in 10 key cities all over the Philippines on June 17. Up for competition in the provincial legs is the customary 10K and 3K races, while the Metro Manila leg on June 17 offers medals and prizes in the 3K, 10K, and 21K distances.

King of the Road races in the provinces on June 17 will be held in the cities of Baguio, Cebu, Cagayan de Oro, Davao, Iloilo, Laoag, Naga, Tacloban and Tarlac. Adidas is targeting 10,000 runners per city in its attempt to gather 100,000 runners in a single-day countrywide marathon.

This year's Adidas King of the Road season began on Feb. 11 in Baguio City with defending champions Eduardo Buenavista and Mercedita Manipol topping the 10K run.

On Sunday, Adidas King of the Road resumes in Davao City with more than 1,500 runners expected to participate in the 10K and 3K events, according to local organizer Vic Sai. Entries are accepted at the Adidas Concept Store, second level Gaisano Mall of Davao City, Jose Laurel Avenue.

IN THIS ISSUE

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- **Gov't allots P5B** to streamline bureaucracy /B8

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SMC sells Coca-Cola stake

$590-M deal gives TCCC full control of local unit

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

SOFT DRINKS GIANT THE COCA-COLA CO. (TCCC) yesterday sealed its purchase of San Miguel Corp.'s 65-percent stake in local firm Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. (CCBPI) for $590 million.

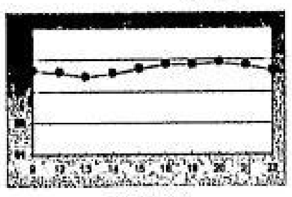
This gives TCCC full control of the Philippine bottling business, which recently has been hounded by double-digit volume declines due to "affordability and availability" issues.

In a statement, The Coca-Cola Co. said its Bottling Investment Group, which manages some of TCCC's bottling operations around the world, would take over manage-

SMC/ B2

SEALED WITH A SHAKE. Coca-Cola president and COO Muhtar Kent (left) takes the hand of San Miguel chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. at the close of yesterday's deal.

INDICATORS



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 48.30 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 22, 2007

STOCK MARKET

Shares down 0.40%

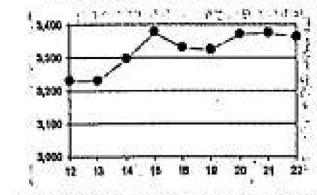
SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 0.40 percent lower as investors used renewed inflation concerns in the United States as an excuse to book profits, dealers said.

They said most indexes were down, except for property, mining and oil stocks, boosted by the surge in prices of precious metals and crude oil.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index closed 13.39 points lower at 3,365.53 after moving between 3,353.33 and 3,378.92. The broader all-share index was down 3.84 points to 2,147.82.

SHARES/ B2

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B3)

Businessmen fear dark clouds over RP deals

By Daxim L. Lucas

(Second of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

OMNI AVIATION CORP. PRESIDENT Ben Hur D. Gomez believes Clark Development Corp.—his landlord—is harassing him into either closing or relocating his flying school.

One such move, he claims, is the decision of authorities to build a 134-meter high flyover at the end of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX), about 100 meters from the end of his runway.

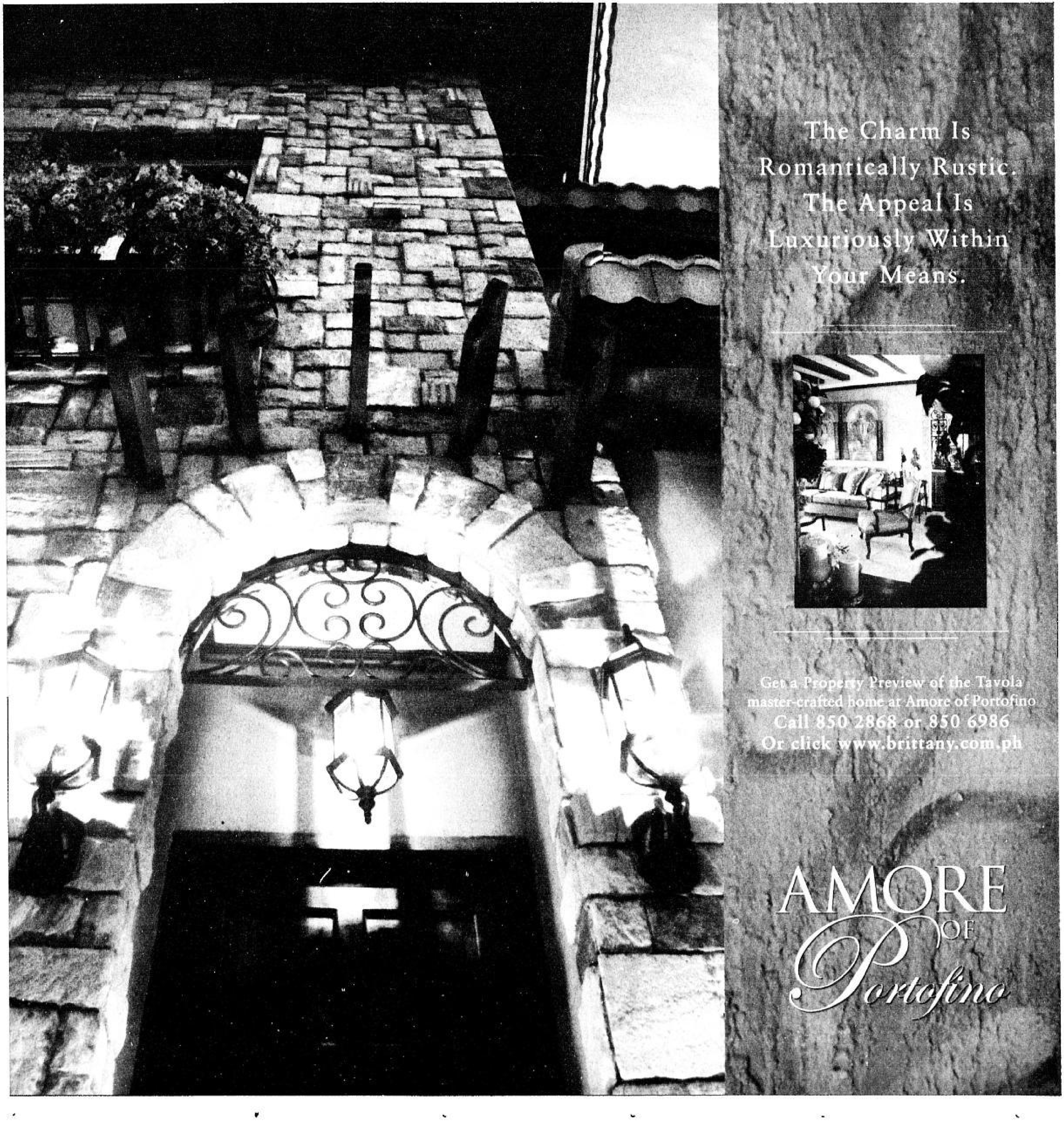
"At first, they said this wouldn't pose a danger to flight operations, but the ATO (Air Transportation Office) told them that it would," he told the INQUIRER.

"For the aircraft to clear this obstruction safely, the pilots would have to approach the runway at a 45-degree angle," said the former Boeing 747 captain. "That's crazy. Everyone knows that the glide slope should be about three degrees."

To remedy the situation, Gomez had CDC agree to extend Omni Aviation's runway by 200 meters in the opposite direction to allow his trainer aircraft to operate safely.

BUSINESSMEN/ B3

Brittany BEAUTIFUL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BSP approves measures to free up forex trade

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE ASIAN CURrency crisis of 1997, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday approved a new set of measures to liberalize foreign exchange trading.

The measures, effective April 2, will be "more responsive to the needs of an expanding, more dynamic economy that has become increasingly integrated with global markets," the BSP said.

In a briefing after the meeting of the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. announced a three-pronged strategy to ease foreign exchange outflow restrictions.

The measures include an increase in banks' allowable foreign currency purchases as share of unencumbered capital—also known as the overbought limit—to the pre-Asian crisis ratio of 20 percent or $50 million, whichever is lower.

At present, the overbought limit stands at 2.5 percent or $5 million, whichever is lower.

The increase in the overbought cap would be matched by a measure that would limit the oversold position, or the amount of dollars the banks are allowed to sell in the open market.

The cap on the oversold position would be set at 20 percent or $50 million, whichever is lower.

He said the formula would be in line with the limits set by other countries in the region, and should be sufficient for local banks to cope with the country's growing forex requirements.

He added that the $50-million nominal limit would be equivalent to 10 percent of the average daily volume turnout at the spot foreign exchange market, the Philippine Dealing System.

Also, the MB had agreed to liberalize other restrictions on the outward flow of foreign exchange. Specifically, the MB would increase the limit on outward investments that a Philippine resident can pursue without seeking BSP approval from $6 million to $12 million a year. The MB would also hike the limit on foreign exchange that clients could buy from banks from $5,000 to $10,000 per transaction.

SMC sells . . .

From page B1

ment of CCBPI.

CCBPI is one of the world's top ten bottlers and owns Cosmos and Philippine Beverage Partners Inc.

"The sale of Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. supports our company's more focused business model, emphasizing fully owned branded positions," said Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., San Miguel chair. "This transaction provides San Miguel the opportunity to focus on its core business areas in the Philippines and its planned expansion throughout the region."

San Miguel, which used to be the majority shareholder of CCBPI until the conclusion of yesterday's deal, said it would develop its own domestic beverage business, producing juice drinks, and ready-to-drink tea to complement existing operations in Thailand and Indonesia.

TCCC president and chief operating officer Muhtar Kent yesterday told reporters that the company is bent on boosting its business in the Philippines by promoting its brands and making its products available throughout the country.

In a briefing held at the Manila Peninsula in Makati, Kent also said that TCCC would soon be coming out with its own line of beverages.

"(The Philippines) is a very important market for us, and we believe our business here has great growth potential," Kent said.

With the conclusion of the deal, TCCC acquired full ownership of CCBPI, along with all voting and economic rights.

"Our partnership with San Miguel over the years has been extremely important to our business in the Philippines," Kent said in a statement. "We are grateful to San Miguel for its continuing support of our long-term commitment to the Philippines, and we look forward to continued cooperation with San Miguel, who will remain a key supplier to our business."

The deal could cost SMC its 80-percent share in the beverage market. But stock analysts believe that San Miguel stands to benefit from the arrangement.

As of end-June, SMC's debt amounted to P137 billion, having ballooned after some aggressive acquisitions in recent years, including two companies in Australia.

CCBPI accounts for 15 percent of SMC's total revenue and 5 percent of operating income.

In a report to the stock exchange, the Coca-Cola Beverage Group said sales volumes dropped 12 percent in the third quarter from the previous year because of stiff competition from carbonated and non-carbonated beverage products. No absolute figures were disclosed.

With a report from AFP

Shares down 0.40%

From page B1

Gainers beat losers 63 to 62, while 49 stocks were unchanged. Volume totaled 9.4 billion shares worth P4.1 billion ($84.91 million).

The top gainer, Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc. soared P1.10 to P3.30 after announcing its foray into the booming property development business.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. shed P10 to P2,595, but its rival, Globe Telecom Inc. advanced P15 to P1,385.

Philex Mining Corp. climbed 25 centavos to P4.25.

Property firm Ayala Land Inc. gained 50 centavos to P17.25.

Food and drinks conglomerate San Miguel Corp.'s A shares shed 50 centavos to P66.50, while its B shares closed unchanged at P78.50.

AFP

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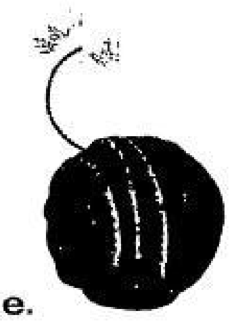

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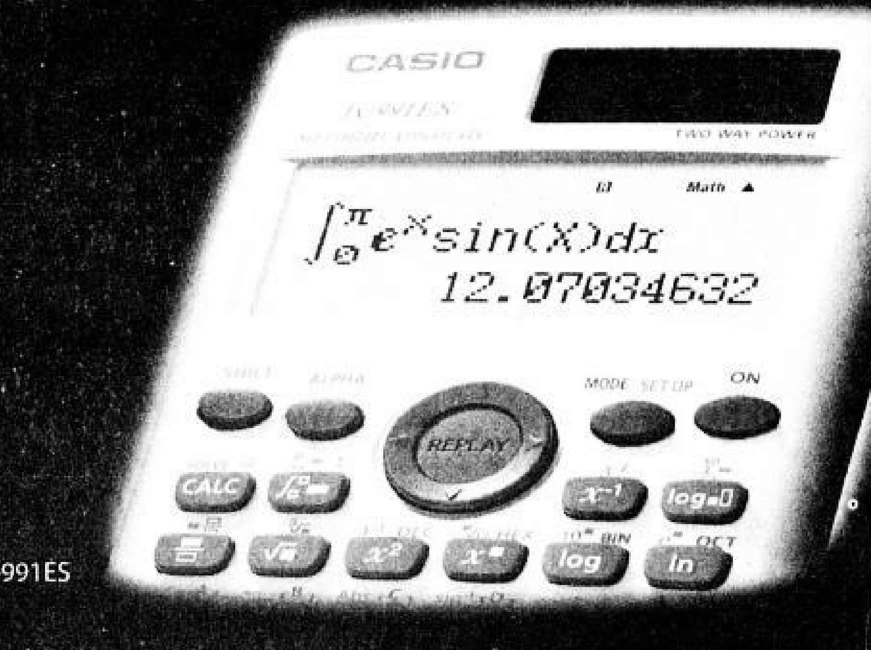

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 22, 2007)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	12	13.5	11.5	13	634,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	63.5	63.5	62	62.5	682,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	69	69	68.5	69	1,309,400
China Banking Corp.	900	900	890	895	4,160
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	38	38	38	38	15,400
Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.59	0.6	0.58	0.58	23,300,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	112	112	112	112	60,830
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	66.5	67	65.5	66	1,457,600
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	61	62	61	62	2,900
Philippine National Bank	54	54	54	54	2,800
Phil. Savings Bank	67	67	66	67	27,800
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	43.5	43.5	42.5	42.5	101,200
Security Bank Corp.	89	90	87	87	243,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	65	65.5	65	65.5	11,400
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Air Kimeng Fin. Corp.	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.8	26,000
Bankard Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	100,000
Citisecoline.Com Inc.	6.4	7.3	6.4	7.3	6,386,000
Filipino Fund Inc	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	3,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1640	1650	1640	1650	1,230
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.04	2.06	470,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	660	670	650	670	2,910
Sun Life Financial Inc	2130	2140	2130	2130	740
Ivantage Corp	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	2,037,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
Pnoc Energy Dev. Corp.	5.6	5.9	5.6	5.9	55,833,000
First Gen Corp.	57.5	58	57.5	57.5	442,200
First Phil Hldgs Corp	80.5	80.5	78.5	78.5	949,300
Manila Electric Co. A	78	78	76.5	77.5	213,500
Manila Electric Co. B	78	79	78	78.5	478,300
Manila Water Co. Inc	9.8	9.8	9.7	9.8	2,020,000
Petron Corp.	4.85	4.85	4.75	4.8	4,332,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	4,940,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.5	1.5	1.48	1.48	833,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.95	3.95	3.95	3.95	152,000
Cadp Group Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	10,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26.5	26.5	25	26	35,200
Jollibee Foods Corp.	53	53	52.5	53	295,600
Rfm Corp.	1.54	1.58	1.5	1.52	110,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	26,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.47	500,000
San Miguel Corp. A	66	66.5	65.5	66.5	59,900
San Miguel Corp. B	78.5	78.5	78	78.5	137,500
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.06	2.06	671,000
Universal Robina Corp.	20.25	20.5	19.75	20	2,886,800
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.92	1.96	1.84	1.9	37,250,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	5	5	4.8	4.85	1,431,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.7	8.7	8.5	8.5	3,384,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	3,000
Republic Cement Corp.	6.2	6.4	6.2	6.4	95,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.4	2,023,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.81	0.81	0.8	0.81	120,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Active Alliance Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	70,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.38	0.4	62,560,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	8,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Asia Amalgamated Holdings	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	200,000
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.013	387,000,000
Ayala Corp.	620	620	610	610	208,750
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.81	0.84	0.81	0.84	300,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	8.9	8.9	8.8	8.8	10,985,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.07	0.07	11,000,000
A. Soriano Corp	3.25	3.4	3.25	3.35	568,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	5,750,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	20,100,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.16	9,825,000
Pal Holdings Inc.	3.55	3.8	3.55	3.8	247,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	2.65	3.3	2.5	3.3	5,172,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	8,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.25	4.25	4.1	4.15	19,868,000
Dmci Holdings Inc	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.6	833,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp	5.8	5.8	5.5	5.7	1,664,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.31	0.33	2,420,000
House of Investments Inc.	3.4	3.45	3.4	3.4	1,579,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	14	14.25	14	14	983,300
Keppel Holdings B	2	2	2	2	115,000
Medco Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	270,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp	0.86	0.86	0.79	0.79	700,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	9	9.5	9	9.1	3,992,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	2.1	2.24	2.04	2.2	5,161,000
Pacifica	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	26,300,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.27	10,820,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	2,000
Solid Group Inc	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	690,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.195	0.205	0.195	0.205	19,130,000
SM Investments Corp.	385	385	377.5	380	368,360
South China Resources Inc	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.18	771,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.74	2.1	1.74	2.06	6,067,000
Wellex Industries Inc	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	2,150,000
Zeus Holdings Inc	0.41	0.49	0.4	0.4	1,980,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	16.75	17.25	16.75	17.25	19,813,400
Araneta Properties Ir	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
Belle Corp.	1.58	1.6	1.54	1.56	19,088,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.42	1.46	935,000
Cityland Development Corp	2.55	2.7	2.55	2.6	413,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.46	3,790,000
Cebu Holdings Inc	3.75	3.9	3.75	3.9	21,000
C & P Homes Inc	2.7	2.85	2.7	2.85	1,378,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	1,440,000
Eib Realty Developers Inc	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	910,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.87	0.88	0.85	0.87	43,050,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	129,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	5,100,000
Filinvest Land Inc	1.92	1.96	1.9	1.92	36,158,000
Gotesco Land Inc	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	210,000
Interport Res.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	75,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.014	0.014	0.012	0.012	161,300,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.55	0.58	0.55	0.57	13,860,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1	1.02	0.97	1.02	18,470,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.027	0.028	0.027	0.028	1,000,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.029	0.03	0.029	0.03	600,000
Megaworld Corp	3.2	3.25	3.15	3.2	38,450,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp	5	5	4.9	4.9	220,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.39	0.42	0.39	0.42	7,270,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	1,020,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	79,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	22.75	23	22.25	23	5,822,900
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.71	0.72	0.68	0.68	46,280,000
SM Development Corp	4.4	4.4	4.25	4.25	1,946,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12.5	12.75	12.5	12.75	7,255,900
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	40,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.13	4,650,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	26	26	25.5	26	133,100
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1.08	1.14	1.08	1.14	304,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.98	1.98	1.96	1.98	12,921,000
Globe Telecom Inc	1395	1395	1380	1385	187,080
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	7.2	7.3	7	7.2	3,542,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co	2600	2605	2590	2595	22,850
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.31	0.32	16,930,000
Imperial Res	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	34,900,000
Ionics Inc	2.44	2.48	2.44	2.48	1,047,000
Ipvg Corp.	5.5	5.8	5.3	5.7	1,217,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	2,500,000
[illegible] Communications Corp.	0.06	0.0625	0.06	0.0625	38,600,000
[illegible] Semiconductors Corp	1.36	1.38	1.36	1.36	387,000
Transpacific Broadband	2.7	2.85	2.6	2.65	6,679,000
Philweb Corp.	0.05	0.0575	0.05	0.055	1,352,600,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.45	4.45	4.2	4.45	467,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	28.5	28.5	27.5	28	2,020,600
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	1.2	1.26	1.18	1.26	197,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	2,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	3	3	2.9	2.95	3,685,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	10,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.98	1.04	0.95	1.02	9,810,000
EDUCATION					
Far Eastern University	810	810	810	810	400
Ipeople, Inc	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.6	234,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.48	2.8	2.48	2.8	2,517,000
Paxys Inc.	28.5	30	28.5	30	2,286,800
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.2	6.4	6.2	6.3	1,674,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	6.2	6.5	6.2	6.4	920,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.011	426,400,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	9.1	9.4	9.1	9.1	2,562,000
Benguet Corp. A	11.5	12	11.5	11.75	79,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	4,000
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	1.48	1.66	1.4	1.6	185,661,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. A	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	122,120,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	24,490,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.03	0.031	0.029	0.03	1,687,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.034	0.035	0.033	0.034	852,300,000
Omico Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.014	0.015	633,700,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4.15	4.3	4.15	4.25	30,389,000
Semirara Mining Corp	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	103,200
United Paragon Mining Co	0.69	0.72	0.69	0.72	1,950,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.16	1.16	1.08	1.12	14,106,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	15,510,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	128,500,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	80,000,000
The Philodrill Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	2,367,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10	10.25	10	10	509,000

CURRENCIES

February 22, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.761035	1.000000	48.1200
Japan	Yen	0.006291	0.008267	0.3978
United Kingdom	Pound	1.487215	1.954200	94.0361
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097414	0.128002	6.1595
Switzerland	Franc	0.614878	0.807950	38.8786
Canada	Dollar	0.656008	0.861995	41.4792
Singapore	Dollar	0.496273	0.652103	31.3792
Australia	Dollar	0.601228	0.790014	38.0155
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.018821	2.652731	127.6494
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.202921	0.266638	12.8306
Brunei	Dollar	0.494661	0.649984	31.2772
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000110	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.022450	0.029499	1.4195
UAE	Dirham	0.207248	0.272324	13.1042
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.314000	63.2297
Korea	Won	0.000811	0.001066	0.0513
China	Yuan**	0.098129	0.128941	6.2046
Argentina	Peso	0.245116	0.322082	15.4986
Brazil	Real	0.366358	0.481394	23.1647
Denmark	Kroner	0.134153	0.176277	8.4824
India	Rupee	0.017296	0.022727	1.0936
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.217906	0.286328	13.7781
Mexico	New Peso	0.069268	0.091018	4.3798
New Zealand	Dollar	0.537075	0.705716	33.9591
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023072	0.030317	1.4589

Source: REUTERS' FOREX CLOSING PRICES as of NY Time Feb. 21, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian Time Closing Rate as of Feb. 15, 2007

LiveIt infuses $11M into Integreon

Fund earmarked for new acquisition

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

LIVEIT, AYALA CORP'S INVESTMENT ARM IN the business process outsourcing sector, said it had infused an additional $11 million into Integreon Managed Solutions Inc.

Last year, LiveIt and its partners bought 100 percent of Integreon for P900 million.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Ayala Corp. said LiveIt was infusing another $11 million into Integreon to help fund its acquisition of CBF Group Inc., a US-based BPO firm that provides enterprise services to law firms.

Upon completion of the deal, CBF's management team will continue to oversee the operations of the company's recently expanded North Dakota facility.

"The acquisition of CBF enhances our position as the leading global provider of legal process outsourcing services," said Liam Brown , Integreon's chief executive officer in the disclosure.

"In addition to our substantial offshore facilities we now have a major operations center in a cost-efficient location in the US, giving us the unparalleled ability to offer legal clients industrial scale outsourcing solutions both onshore and offshore."

Brown also said the move paved the way for the establishment of ties with some of the world's top law firms.

"Law firms are following the lead of their corporate clients and are increasingly looking at innovative forms of outsourcing as a means of improving operating efficiencies and cost savings," said Michael Bryant, CBF's chief executive.

Integreon recently signed new contracts, including an agreement to build a service center in Delhi to support the administrative functions of Clifford Chance, the world's largest law firm.

According to Alfredo I. Ayala, CEO of LiveIt and chair of Integreon: "Our additional investment in Integreon is a testament to our strong belief that its acquisition of CBF and expansion into new sites in Manila and Delhi will enable the company to provide its customers with an even fuller range of attractive options."

Integreon is headquartered in Los Angeles and has sales offices in London and New York.

US firm buying local BPO venture

CALIFORNIA-BASED SYNNEX CORP., A global information technology services provider, said it would acquire Philippine firm Link2Support Inc. (L2S), a knowledge process outsourcing and contact center company.

L2S said it had signed a definitive agreement with Synnex Corp. It, however, declined to reveal the terms of the deal.

The local company has nearly five years of experience in the provision of technical support services to clients in various global locations. It recently expanded its contact center facility and opened additional sites in Mindanao, Cagayan de Oro and Davao to cope with increasing demand.

The Eastwood City site serves as L2S' headquarters with more than 2,000 employees.

According to Synnex, acquiring L2S will enable it to offer more high-value IT services, such as multi-tiered technical support, knowledge process services, and software to hardware engineering.

Synnex president and CEO Robert Huang said in a statement the acquisition would boost the US company's call center expertise.

Riza T. Olchondra

Businessmen fear dark clouds ...

From page B1

But his woes did not end there.

"Now they tell me I can't extend the runway because they'll build a tall structure at the other end," he said, throwing up his arms in exasperation.

Omni Aviation's 25-year lease on the facilities of the former Clark Aero Club was sealed in 1994, when the area was still blanketed under lahar from Mount Pinatubo's eruption.

"Nobody even wanted to touch this area," Gomez said.

Because of the poor physical conditions at that time, he admits that he got the lease at cheap rates. Thus, there are allegations that Omni Aviation is using the 32-hectare property for free—a charge that Gomez flatly denies.

In a letter sent to the ATO last year, SCTEX project manager Alex T. Solomon claimed that the idea to extend the runway in the opposite direction would not sit well with the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) because of the additional cost involved.

"The land being used by Omni—free for the last 12 years—is government property," Solomon said in his letter to ATO chief Nilo C. Jatico.

On the contrary, Gomez said that his flying school paid CDC a total of P2.1 million in fees and rentals for 2005, and another P1.7 million the year before that.

"And we have been paying our rent and fees faithfully every year," he said. "Why pick on us?"

For businessmen, such public spats between investors and the government highlight the longstanding fears about the sanctity of contracts in the local setting.

Makati Business Club (MBC) executive director Alberto Lim believes that government agencies should renegotiate unfavorable terms with investors instead of strong-arming them into folding up.

"Situations like these don't add to investor confidence," he said in an interview. "This highlights fears that there is an unstable [business] environment where contracts can be rescinded."

Lim said that the case of Omni Aviation is only a small example of larger problems, like the voided deal with the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) for the multibillion-peso construction of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport's Terminal 3.

"Just look at cases like Piatco," the MBC official said. "It's a monument to the instability of our policies."

However, the BCDA already has given reassurances that its CDC unit is not about to unilaterally rescind Omni Aviation's 25-year lease.

In an interview, BCDA president Narciso L. Abaya said that a common ground was being sought between Gomez's flying school and Clark International Airport Corp., the company in charge of the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport.

"I was told by (CIAC president Jose Victor I.) Luciano that Omni was not being evicted," Abaya said. "They are trying to see what they can do."

In particular, Abaya pointed out that Omni Aviation's flight operations were not under the jurisdiction of the DMIA control tower, potentially posing a hazard to navigation of commercial airliners taking off and landing nearby.

"But I was assured that there is no eviction," Abaya stressed.

Despite this, however, some more damage may have already been done to the country's image as a desirable place for doing business.

For MBC's Lim, fears over the sanctity of contracts will continue to haunt the business scene as long as problems crop up, whether it's a small firm like Omni Aviation or a large deal like Piatco's Terminal 3.

"[Investors] will continue to hold back," he said.

Lim noted that while the country received $2 billion worth of foreign direct investments last year, this stands far below the $8-billion potential cited by the European Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

This could only be achieved if this "overhang" on the sanctity of contracts is removed.

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Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Feb. 20, 2007	Last Week Feb. 13, 2007
Bond Fund - Peso	1.62547	1.62107
Managed Fund - Peso	1.89182	1.86868
Growth Fund - Peso	1.81909	1.75199
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.3676	1.3638

Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

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Investment Funds of Wealth Builder & Wealth Secure

	UNIT PRICES (In Php)	
	Feb.19,2007	Feb.12,2007
Fixed Income Fund	1.271604	1.270146
Balanced Fund	1.407175	1.387994
Equity Fund	1.651253	1.602012

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(Each topic may be attended separately)

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Mar 9 MANAGEMENT OF RENTAL PROPERTIES
Mar 12 LEGAL ASPECT OF SALE, MORTGAGE & LEASE WITH CONTRACT DOCUMENTATION AND REGISTRATION
Mar 14 HOW TO START & MANAGE A SUCCESSFUL REALTY OFFICE
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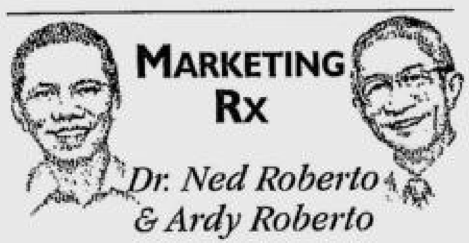
'How can the Blue Ocean marketing strategy help my business?'



MARKETING Rx
Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

JUST THE OTHER DAY, WE HAD LUNCH with a director of a top 10 Fortune company who is being besieged by new competition, including copycats. He asked us "What's this Blue Ocean marketing (strategy) all about?" This is not the first time we've been asked this question. Our readers are also curious about Blue Ocean Strategy.

The Blue Ocean marketing strategy refers to the "Blue Ocean Strategy," a bestseller written by W. Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne and published by the Harvard Business School Press in 2005. The book has sold over a million copies (translated in 37 languages) and has made this Korean and French tandem one of the most-sought after business speakers in the industry. Last time we checked, Kim and Mauborgne now command $150,000 each, per talk!

To answer the question we turned to Josiah Go, prolific marketing author, chair of Mansmith and Fielders training company, who had the foresight to acquire the license to teach the Blue Ocean Strategy here in the Philippines. (Thus saving the Philippine marketing community $150,000. i.e. you could just hire Go to speak at a tiny fraction of what it would cost you to hire either Kim or Mauborgne.) Go is the first and only Filipino to successfully complete the Blue Ocean Strategy qualification process in France and the first professor of a 3-unit, full semester Blue Ocean Strategy in Southeast Asia.

This week, Go, answers your frequently asked questions about Blue Ocean Strategy.

Q: What are the key principles of Blue Ocean Strategy ?

Go: To win in the future, companies must stop competing with each other the traditional way. Instead, a change in paradigm is needed—the only way to beat the competition is to stop trying to beat the competition. The concept of value innovation, which places equal emphasis on both value and innovation, is the cornerstone of Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS). This is done by creating a leap in value for buyers and the firm, thereby opening up new and uncontested market by aligning innovation with utility, price, and cost positions. Blue oceans are thus created in a sustainable manner by simultaneously driving costs down while driving value and differentiation up for the buyers.

Q: How is BOS similar to or different from marketing strategy?

Go: In terms of customers, BOS is similar to marketing strategy in that both aim to assemble products or services that can satisfy the target consumers. The difference is that traditional marketing strategy looks at existing demand and satisfying current customers while BOS is not competition-based and it looks at non-customers and captures new demand in an uncontested market space.

In terms of competition, both traditional marketing strategy and BOS need to compete, however, traditional marketing strategy aims to beat existing competition by gaining market shares while BOS tries to create new value to make existing competition irrelevant.

In terms of company, traditional marketing looks at incremental improvement in revenue and profit, while BOS looks at a giant leap of value, thus giant leap in revenue and profit growth. Also, profit-wise, traditional marketing strategy seldom looks at how to reduce cost while BOS is both differentiation and cost-based. Thus, while the whole system of an organization's activities in traditional marketing strategy is aligned with differentiation; BOS is aligned with both differentiation and low cost simultaneously.

Q: Does my company/business really need this Blue Ocean strategy? We're doing all right with our current promos. Are there Filipino companies adopting this strategy?

Go: A lot of companies are suffering in red oceans—they continuously try to outperform rivals by competing on price or promo, grabbing a piece of the existing known market space without looking at other viable options. Their promo does not even help them build their brand equity. Many also have a wrong concept of a low-price offering. They focus too much on the competition and brand switching without looking at what customers really need and want. They should continuously be alert asking one simple question—what fundamental change in offering level buyers receive will make the competition irrelevant?

HBC is one of my favorite examples of a Blue Ocean Strategy company in the Philippines. From an obscure retailer mixing incompatible grocery products and beauty care products, they dropped groceries and canned products and focused on pushing beauty products. From selling brands of multinational manufacturers, they successfully built their own multi-brand private label lines now accounting for over 60 percent of their total sales; thus enabling them to be both differentiated and have low-cost at the same time. Instead of competing with the traditional beauty care "vaciador" stores, they have repositioned themselves and attracted new customers who used to visit retail shops selling imported and branded beauty care products, transforming them from a retailer losing money four years ago to winning the Most Outstanding Retailer award given by the Philippine Retailers Association.

Another example is C2 with great value innovation—green tea brewed and bottled on the same day, matched with great taste, great image at an affordable price. URC positioned the product against soft drinks which at the time of launch was 47 times bigger than ready-to-drink (RTD) tea and four times bigger than the company size of URC. Today, C2 sells much more than the original market size of RTD tea when the product was launched.

C2 is a blue ocean strategy launch because instead of looking at the existing RTD tea market as competition, it looked at alternatives and competed in a relatively uncontested market space. Instead of beating the competition, they made the competition irrelevant. Instead of exploiting existing demand by simply convincing people to switch RTD tea brand, C2 created and captured new demand from those no longer drinking soft drinks—people who are health conscious or those who would like their family members to drink something healthier than the usual soda. And because URC is part of the JG Summit conglomerate, the synergy from the bottles and the sugar supplied by their sister companies made the product both differentiated and low-cost at the same time, breaking the traditional value-cost trade off.

Josiah Go will talk on "How to Formulate New Products via Blue Ocean Strategy and Make Competition Irrelevant" at the 3rd Market Masters Conference on March 21, Mandarin Oriental Hotel and co-sponsored by the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Profit will go to Mansmith & Fielders' charity and advocacy projects. Call 722-2318 or 727-7142 .

E-mail your questions to MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net . God bless!

The Senior Citizens Act

By Ma. Luz Victoria A. Ballesteros and Joel L. Tan-Torres
SGV & Co

TAX-FILES

IF YOU HAVE AN AGED PARENT OR a grandparent living with you, chances are you're familiar with the senior citizens' discount. You must know how it works, how a senior citizen's card allows old people to avail of discounts at fastfood chains, restaurants, and most specially drug stores. And, to those in their 50s and approaching the stage of "llebo sisenta," you must know that the threshold for being categorized as a legitimate senior citizen is 60. At one time or another, you may have been asked by a food server or counter salesperson, much to your chagrin and much to the amusement of your companions, whether you have your senior citizens card with you.

What exactly are the mechanics for availing of these discounts? It may be useful to look into the actual rules as implemented by our authorities, so that all you "golden people" out there, as well as those taking care of an elderly person, may know what your rights and privileges are.

In compliance with the statement in our Constitution that it is the duty of the family to take care of its elderly members, while it is the duty of the State to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development, Republic Act No. 9257, otherwise known as the "Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003" was signed into law. This law provides more details by which our government can provide preferential treatment, particularly in terms of monetary support, to senior citizens in our midst. Early this year, on Feb. 21, 2006, the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) released the implementing rules for this particular law through Revenue Regulation No. 4-2006.

Requirements for eligibility

According to these rules, a senior citizen is any resident citizen of the Philippines who is at least 60 years old, and who has an annual income of P60,000 or less. To be eligible for the 20-percent discount on basic services, the senior citizen may submit any of three documents: (1) an ID issued by the city or municipal mayor, or the barangay captain of the place where the senior citizen resides; (2) the passport of the senior citizen, or (3) other documents that establish that the senior citizen is a citizen of the Philippines and is at least 60 years old.

For the tax exemption of income earned by a senior citizen, he or she must comply with three requirements. First, the senior citizen must first be qualified by the revenue district officer (RDO) having jurisdiction over his or her place of residence. This can be easily done by submitting a certified true copy of the senior citizen's ID duly issued by the Office for Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA) in the city or municipality where he or she resides. Next, he or she must file an annual information return indicating that his or her taxable income does not exceed the poverty level as determined by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) through the National Statistical Coordinating Board (NSCB). All you need to do is to write a formal letter stating this fact to the BIR for this year and every year thereafter. Finally, if the senior citizen is qualified, his name shall be recorded by the RDO in the master list of tax-exempt senior citizens for that particular year, which the RDO is required to keep.

Specific benefits

The benefits include the grant of a 20-percent discount on services or goods purchased from the following establishments: Transportation, hotel and lodging, restaurants and recreation centers, purchase of medicines, theaters, cinema houses, concert halls, circuses, carnivals and other places of culture, leisure and amusement. These are important privileges as these are the very things that bring simple enjoyment to our senior citizens, relishing a good meal in a restaurant once in a while, taking a vacation here and there, or even watching a concert or play for those culturally-inclined. And the most important and often used is the discount on purchase of medicines from your friendly neighborhood drug store. Not only that, but senior citizens are also granted free medical and dental services in government establishments anywhere in the country.

That's not all. With the expanded law in place, senior citizens can now avail of a 20-percent discount on medical and dental services. Medical services include professional fees of attending physicians and other health care professionals, and diagnostic and laboratory tests that are necessary for the diagnosis and/or treatment of an illness or injury, and even hospital rooms. Dental services include oral examination, cleaning, permanent and temporary filling, extraction, cleaning, permanent and temporary filling, extraction and gum treatments, restoration, replacement or repositioning of teeth, and related services.

Another new feature is the grant of a 20-percent discount on diagnostic and laboratory fees, like X-ray, CT scan, blood chemistry exam, histopathology and immunopathology, hematology, urinalysis, parasitology and bacteriology test, serology and blood banking.

In consideration of those senior citizens who enjoy traveling, a 20-percent discount has been granted on fare for domestic air and sea travel for their exclusive use and enjoyment. And for those senior citizens from the academe or who wish to pursue higher studies, there is a promise of educational assistance to senior citizens who desire to pursue post-secondary, tertiary, post-tertiary, as well as vocational or technical education in both public and private schools through the provision of scholarships, grants and other financial aid.

Tax-wise, all senior citizens whose annual taxable income does not exceed the poverty level as determined by NEDA are declared exempt from the payment of individual income taxes.

The other side

How should establishments enumerated record the discounts given to these senior citizens? If your *suki* is 60 years old or older, take note: The discounts you give to your elderly customer should be treated as a tax deduction.

Translation: The amount you give as a discount to your customer is used to reduce the amount upon which you base the tax due on your income. The result is that you report your income based on the net amount you receive from your customer who is a senior citizen. As a pre-requisite for availing of this tax deduction, however, the cost of the discount should be subtracted from the gross income for the same period or taxable year that the discount is granted. In addition, the total amount of the deduction claimed should have been included in computing the gross sales or gross receipts for the period under consideration. Failure to comply with these particular requirements will disqualify the entity from claiming the discount given to senior citizens as a tax deduction.

Compliance requirements

For record-keeping purposes, these are the pointers you need to know if you have customers who are senior citizens. Only the portion of the gross sales exclusively used, consumed or enjoyed by a senior citizen is eligible for the sales discount. So if there is one senior citizen in a group of five eating in a restaurant, only one-fifth of the bill is eligible for the discount. Also, the gross selling price and the sales discount must be separately indicated in the official receipt or sales invoice. A record must also be kept of the following details: Name of the senior citizen, TIN, OSCA ID, gross sales / gross receipts, sales discount granted, date of transaction, and invoice number. These data must be maintained for every sale transaction to a senior citizen.

There is no use for these provisions of law, however, if they are not actually claimed by the beneficiaries and implemented. So those senior citizens who have not yet applied for their senior citizens card, let's not be shy. There's nothing embarrassing about growing old gracefully, after all. Let's keep in mind that the reason behind the law is to motivate and encourage senior citizens to contribute to nation-building in their later years, as well as to encourage their families, their loved ones and the communities they live with to reaffirm the valued Filipino tradition of caring for our elderly.

Press conferences: When not to hold them

By Joy L. Buensalido
Contributor

MOST PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS are judged by how they can organize and manage press conferences. There is something powerful about being able to gather media to a meeting where the purpose is to get them to understand your message and write about it on print or feature it in broadcast.

But any PR person worth his reputation will also tell you that press conferences are not done just to please a client or to show off without any serious purpose.

Press conferences are not always like the way they are portrayed in movies or on TV where the rooms are always teeming with eager press all clamoring to question the person calling the conference. That only happens when there is a critical issue at hand—like the Lebanon war or the leakage of the nursing board exams.

Hard news

Press conferences work best for hard news such as government announcements, foreign policy, business developments, matters of national interest. There are usually "beat reporters" (reporters tasked to cover a particular person, group or institution) like the Malacañang press corps, who cover these.

Such is not the case for private press conferences called to introduce a new detergent or to inaugurate a new hospital wing. Unless the detergent can remove stains without using water, or if the new hospital wing will be inaugurated by a celebrity like Princess Caroline of Monaco, the public relations expert has to think up of how to effectively fill up a room with the right media people whose presence will translate to the desired media mileage.

As a rule, I don't advise my clients to hold a press conference unless they can answer yes resoundingly to the following:

- Do you have something earthshaking or newsworthy to say that can't be issued in a press release? Is the press con the best way to communicate the message?

If the only objective of the press con is to introduce new company executives or to launch a new product whose attributes can better be expounded on in a press kit, it is wiser to prepare well written releases and send them to the editors than invite them to come to a function which will compete with their schedules, not to mention the drive to the venue, finding parking, and spending at least two hours waiting for the program to finish. Journalists are a jaded lot and if you can't offer them anything extraordinary in your program, you are wasting their time.

Holding a press con for a not-so-urgent topic might end up with no media if they suddenly get called to a "breaking news" story. How many times did we confirm attendees who were a no-show because their editors ordered them to attend a more urgent coverage? Given a choice between the resignation of several Cabinet members and a new treatment for osteoporosis, where do you think the TV will go?

- Do you have a sizable budget to cover variable costs such as invitations, venue and food, tokens, a program with celebrity hosts, press kits, stage set-up and collateral materials?

Many clients like to factor in a press conference into their marketing plan even when it's not necessary because they want to maximize the use of the venue of their sales launch.

This is the wrong reason to have a press con. It is more advisable to allot a budget to invite to a more intimate dinner or lunch, the appropriate media who can better appreciate and write about the new product or event, rather than invite a bunch of people, some of whom turn out to be non-media people because they were sent by the advertising department of the media to scout for ads from this client. This tends to defeat the real purpose of a press conference which is for the authentic journalists to get to know the company, and whatever it is they're launching.

- Are you prepared to answer all kinds of questions about your company, sometimes not necessarily related to the product or event you are promoting or introducing?

Max Edralin, a PR pioneer, and our Ipra colleague, recounted a story about a press conference they organized for the World Boy Scout Jamboree years ago. They invited then President Fidel Ramos to be the chair of the jamboree and on the opening day, they invited the media to cover the program. Nothing came out about the jamboree. What the reporters submitted to their editors were stories about an education issue, which they based on an "ambush" interview with then Secretary of Education Isidro Cariño.

Potential nightmare

That is one potential "nightmare" for PR organizers: that the media will pick up another topic and use the press con as an opportunity to get "scoops," that may even be negative to the client or company.

This is why it's important for company executives and spokespersons to be media trained and know how to deal with inquisitive reporters. If they're not properly oriented on how to answer questions, they may give out inaccurate information or worse, be misquoted.

- Is the timing right for you to hold this press conference? Are there other events scheduled on the same day which the same people you invited are also expected to attend?

Press conferences should be scheduled when the media is available and not when it's convenient for the company. The best time to invite them is from midmorning to lunch time but never in the evenings or at press time, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Perfect tool

It is also important not to schedule press conferences on holidays or weekends or when there are other big events scheduled. When planning the date for a press con, find out whether there are other events coinciding on that day.

If you can talk to the organizers of the other event, perhaps you can arrange to "share" the media by scheduling one press con earlier or later and by choosing venues which are near to each other. That way, both press cons can be winners.

Press conferences are best reserved for very important purposes only. If managed well, they can be a perfect tool for public relations.

(The author is president of Buensalido Public Relations Office and chair of the Philippine chapter of the International Public Relations Association (Ipra), a worldwide organization of PR practitioners in 96 countries established in 1955. Ipra members are writing a series of educational articles about PR.)

Property boom seen boosting thrift banking sector growth

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BOOM IN THE PROPERTY SECTOR, FUeled by low domestic interest rates and rising demand from the "new middle class," is boosting the performance of the country's thrift banks.

In a briefing ahead of the Chamber of Thrift Banks' annual convention on March 9, industry leaders said the improving property valuation after a 10-year slump had become a big catalyst for the sector.

CTB executive director Suzanne Felix said the industry was bullish on the property sector given the rising demand from the "new middle class," referring to overseas Filipino workers and the growing pool of knowledge-based workers who may be deployed abroad or employed onshore in fast-growing sectors like business process outsourcing.

"It's supposed to last for quite sometime as the property boom has just started," Felix said, noting that the boom had likewise enabled more thrift banks to unload idle property assets on their own.

Philippine Savings Bank president Pascual Garcia, who is also CTB vice president and convention chair, said the turnaround in the property sector was giving local thrift banks the opportunity to improve their asset portfolio. Banks are now expanding their housing mortgage business and disposing of their idle property holdings at better prices, he said.

Garcia said the thrift banking sector was expecting the industry's loan portfolio to rise by 15-20 percent this year, outpacing the lending growth posted by much bigger commercial banks.

PSBank, which offers housing mortgages, posted a 33-percent growth in its housing loan business in 2006, up from 15 percent and 20 percent in 2004 and 2005, respectively.

"Providing fixed-rate housing loans for the public is a critical tool to help stimulate demand," Garcia said.

"As interest rates continue to go down, we will see more fixed pricing schemes for longer mortgages," he said.

In the meantime, the CTB 2007 convention on March 9 at Dusit Hotel has adopted the theme "Thrift Banks: Government's Partner in Promoting Economic Growth." President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will be the keynote speaker and Vice President Noli de Castro will talk about financing for housing.

Lafayette raises $15M for project

LAFAYETTE MINING Ltd. of Australia has completed a US$15-million convertible note issue, the first of a series of financial inflows into its Philippine mining operations.

This followed the government's decision allowing Lafayette's Rapu Rapu project to resume commercial operations.

Southeast Asia Strategic Asset Fund (Seasaf) had been ready with the funds and was just waiting for Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Angelo Reyes, chair of the Pollution Adjudication Board, to issue the order for the project restart.

Lafayette Phils. chair and president Carlos G. Dominguez said Reyes' order was critical in inspiring investor confidence and Seasaf showed this by acting just days after the Feb.8 order was issued.

Of the $15 million, about $12 million will be used for operating expenses and working capital. The balance will be for exploration.

The Seasaf funds will be given to LML which would, in turn, re-lend it to its operating unit in Rapu Rapu.

On top of these, the project will spend about P400 million yearly in Bicol, in terms of direct and indirect salaries and local purchases of supplies and food for the workforce.

The project expects also to pay the municipality of Rapu Rapu about P30 million in direct taxes each year and the national government, about P200 million.

"We will definitely be a major economic factor in the region and we aim to make our contributions felt and meaningful," Dominguez said.

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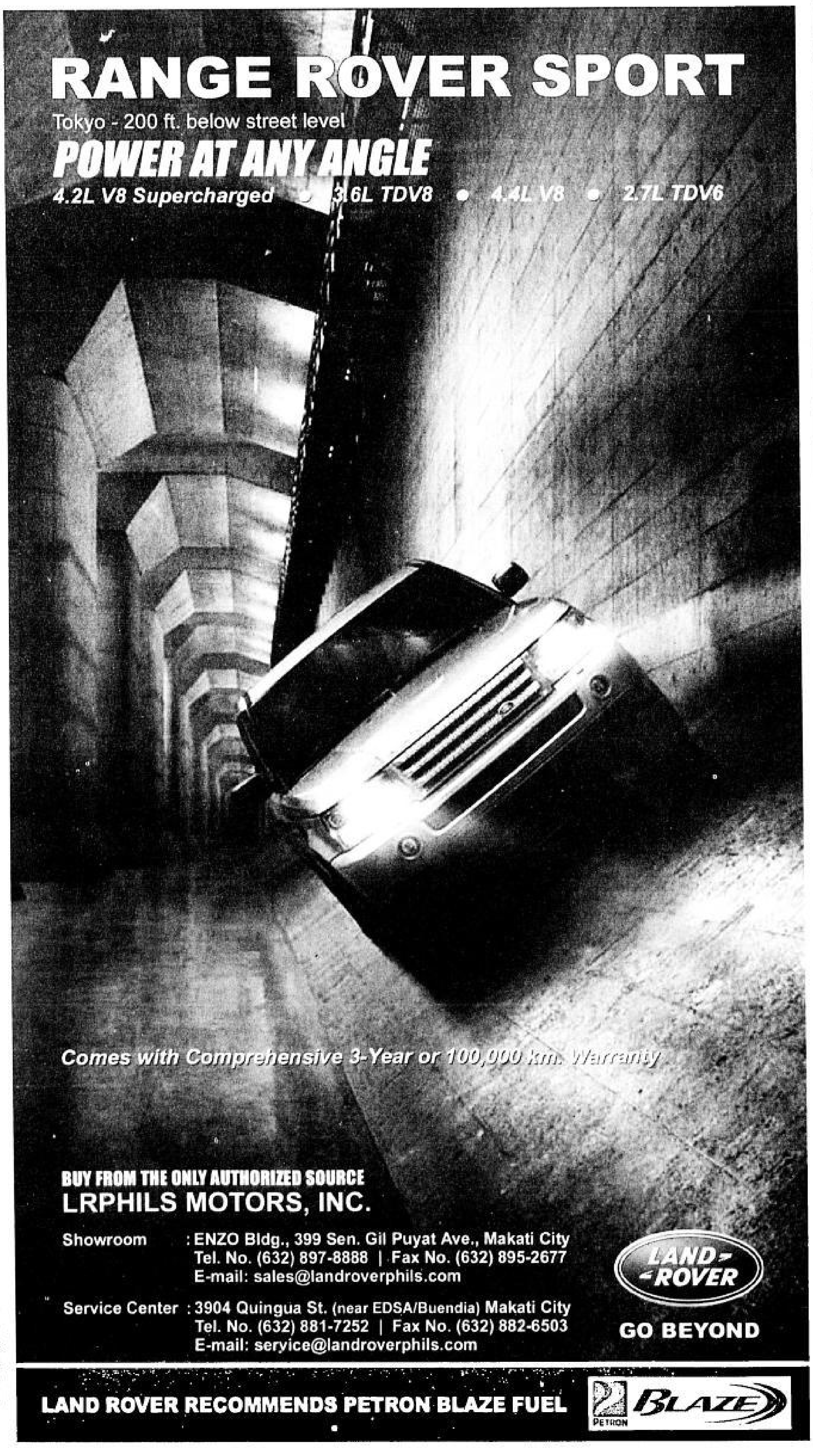
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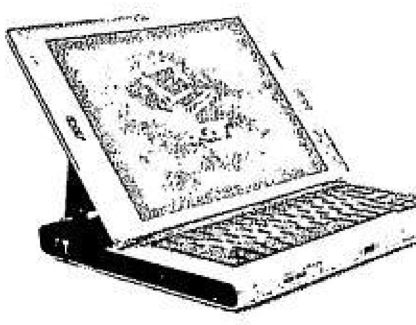
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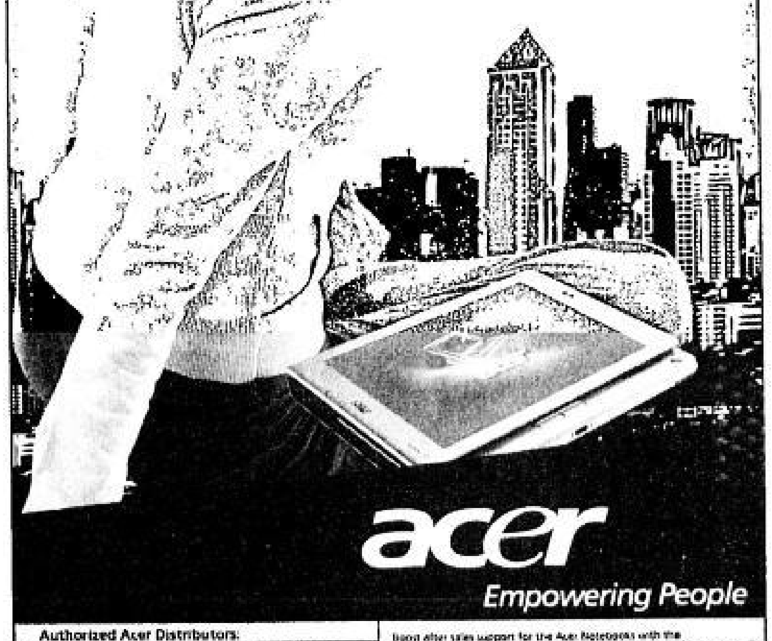
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Invitation to Bid for the Provision of Multi-Point Videoconferencing Bridge and Gateway
(RP No. 07-7191)

1. The Asian Development Bank (ADB), a multilateral development finance institution headquartered in Manila, Philippines, wishes to receive bids from prospective bidders for the provision of Multi-Point Videoconferencing Bridge and Gateway.
2. Bid documents can be obtained from Procurement and Contracting Unit, Institutional Services Division, Office of Administrative Services (OAIS-PC), Room 1636 South, at the above address, from **22 to 28 February 2007** from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For inquiries, you may contact Edwin Montevirgen at the above telephone/fax numbers or e-mail address.
3. Your proposal in a sealed envelope should reach ADB by 2:00pm of **15 March 2007** by hand carry, courier or airmail to the following address: Head, Procurement and Contracting Unit, Institutional Services Division, Office of Administrative Services, Asian Development Bank, 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila, Philippines.

   The envelope should be marked ***"Sealed bid for Provision of Multi-Point Videoconferencing Bridge and Gateway (RP No. 07-7191), do not open before 2:30pm of 15 March 2007"***.
4. The bidder should submit a Bid Security in the amount of Php245,000, valid for sixty (60) calendar days beyond the bid submission date.
5. The successful bidder shall deposit with ADB a Performance Security in the amount of ten percent (10%) of the total PO amount.
6. This invitation does not entail any commitment on the part of ADB, either financial or otherwise. Any cost of preparation of the bid shall be borne solely by the applicant.

CÉCILE L.H.F. GREGORY
Director
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NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s.

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
HAPPY TALK LEARNING CENTER U-1702 Cityland Pasong Tamo Tower, 2210 Chino Roces Ave., Makati City	Kyoung Seb Ban	Consultant
HANKOOK AIR SERVICES INC. Unit 101 & 102 Le Domaine Condominium, Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Goun Jeon	Supervisor
L'OREAL PHILIPPINES INC. 23/F Robinson's Equitable Tower, No. 4 ADB Ave., cor. Poveda St., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Luc-Olivier Jean-Marie Marquet	Managing Director

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI – February 23, 2007)

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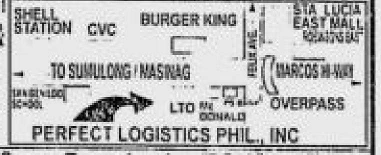

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From The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupery

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His loving wife **Chita Nievera**; children **Ruby & Rick Oden, Lizette & Enic Gueco, Joel, Vincent & Reenee Alvarez, Trixie & Erick Garcia, Janelle & Matt Squires, Karen & Jimmy Kang, EJ** and **Angelo & Lala Alvarez**; grandchildren **Kacey, Kyle, Kameron, Jaime, Mikee, Martine, Sam, Alyssa, Gaby, Sabrina** and **Tiffany**; siblings **Toti** (†) **& Mel, Nena & Logy, Mike & Inday, Peachy & Carlos, Baby, Nienie & Quinito, Frankie & Lani** and **Tina**, invite you to come to reminisce and celebrate the life of Eddie.

His remains lie in state at Capilla dela Virgen at Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City. Daily Masses will be at 7:00 p.m.

Funeral Mass will be on Sunday, February 25, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. Eddie's remains will be cremated at the Loyola Memorial Chapels & Crematorium, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City, immediately following the mass.

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†

"Accept me, dear God, accept me for this while ...
I have wandered in pursuit of voices that drew me, yet led me nowhere ...
Now let me sit in peace and listen to Your Words in the soul of my silence

Rabindranath Tagore

ENGR. GONZALO GAN GO, SR.

January 10, 1922 – February 18, 2007

*Solemnly returned to the Lord to celebrate blissful eternity in the loving arms of his beloved wife, **Generosa Santiago Go**†*

His children **Elizabeth** and **Jaime, Gonzalo Jr.** and **Lorelie,** and **Winston** and **Marilyn**

His grandchildren **Edward Jay** and **Rowena, Katherine Ann, Michael James; Giancarlo, Gonzalo IV, Gianfranco, Gian Charlie, Genelorose; Leilani,** and **Gonzalo III**

His great-granddaughter **Heather Ashley**

His brothers **Mario** and **Juanito,** sisters **Angelina** and **Teodora,** relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at their residence in San Antonio, Nueva Ecija.

Interment will be on February 25, 2007 at Villa Generosa Memorial Park, San Antonio Nueva Ecija subsequent to the Requiem Mass at 10:00 in the morning at the San Antonio Abad Parish Church.

More Classifieds:
- SSS
- Province of Isabela
A10
- UP-Visayas
- City of Olongapo
A20
- Province of Cebu
- Office of Ombudsman
A21

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

Our Dearly Beloved

SOPHIA "SOPHING" ABITANG RESURRECCION

May 1, 1925 – February 15, 2007

Peacefully joined our Lord on February 15, 2007 at the age of 81.

Her loving husband **Atty. Diomedes T. Resurreccion**; children **Diomedes, Jr. (Diophy)** and **Susan** and their son **Diomedes, III (Jojo)**; **Dante** and **Elaine** and their children **Danel, Dalaine (Princess),** and **Dana**; **Donald** and **Zeny** and their children **Dixie Jane** and **Dawn Jasmin**; and **Debbie** and **Marlon Leyson** and their children **Deo Marll** and **Dayle**; and all her sisters **Lily** and **Nonie**, brothers **Romy, Banny, Gene** and **Tony**; nieces, nephews, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at their Family Residence on Camia Street, Poblacion, Banga, Aklan.

Interment will be tomorrow, February 24, 2007 after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Parish Church, Poblacion, Banga, Aklan.

Our Dearly Beloved Daddy

Judge Santiago F. Bautista, Jr.

Ret. MTCC Judge – San Jose City, Nueva Ecija
Former City Councilor and Register of Deeds

Finally dropped forever his working tools on February 18, 2007 at the age of 76.

His loving wife, **Lourdes**; children **Luigi** and **Mela, Apple** and **Russel, Patti** and **Nelson**; grandchildren **Sean IV** and **Nicole,** brothers and sisters, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his residence at Bonifacio St., San Jose City, Nueva Ecija.

Interment will be tomorrow, February 24, 2007 at the San Jose Catholic Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the St. Joseph Cathedral.

Our Dearly Beloved

DIOSDADO GARCIA DE LEON
"Tatay Dody"

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 21, 2007.

His loving wife **Onciang** and children **Rey**, **Ross** and **Leny**; sisters **Letty**, **Didi**, **Olive** and **Zynia**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at 518 Vicente del Fierro Street, Gagalangin, Tondo, Manila.

Interment will be on February 27, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. at the North Cemetery, La Loma, Quezon City.

"My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him; He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my Fortress, I will never be shaken." Psalm 62:1

Our Dearly Beloved

Engr. Emmanuel Quiroz Topacio

Now rests in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord.
He joined our Creator on the 21st of February 2007 at the age of 93.

His loving wife **Carmelita**; children **Teodulo & Nadine, Roberta & Eduardo, Augusto & Antoinetta**; grandchildren **Paul, Emma, Christine** and **Ada,** great-grandson **Aldwyn** and all his relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Sapinoso Premiere Chapel at Gen. E. Topacio St., Imus, Cavite.

Interment will be at Imus Cemetery on 25 February 2007 after the 12:30 p.m. Mass at La Funeraria Sapinoso Premiere Chapel.

Our Dearly Beloved

AUREA CALCES LANSIGAN

(August 24, 1910 - February 20, 2007)

Peacefully joined our Lord on February 20, 2007 at the age of 96.

Her loving husband **Nicolas** (†); children **Edith & Pons Bernardo, Ellen & Jim Elphick, Nick & Lisa Lansigan, Raquel Marchenese, Dexie & Beegh Lansigan**; grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Nacional Memorial Homes, located at G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City and will be transferred to St. Therese Church, Los Baños, Laguna tomorrow, February 24, 2007 at 7:00 a.m.

Interment will follow at the Bay Municipal Cemetery, Bay, Laguna after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. (2 Timothy 4)

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL GOVERNANCE, AGRI-BUSINESS, EDUCATION, COMMUNICATIONS, REINTEGRATION OF EX-COMBATANTS AND PROJECT ADMINISTRATION EXPERTS

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- Five years of relevant experience in the Philippines or Southeast Asia. Experience in Mindanao preferred.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in English and Filipino.

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Qualifications:

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- USAID related procurement and contracting experience preferred.
- Five years of relevant experience in the Philippines or Southeast Asia.
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Please send a chronological CV, 3-4 references and a brief cover letter to philrecruit2@chemonics.com by March 9, 2007.
Specify position in email subject line.

Final candidates will be contacted for interviews

Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar Street, Zamboanga City

SECTION I. INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Zamboanga City Water District, through its Bids and Awards Committee I (BAC I), invites Suppliers/Manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

LOT No.	PR No.	Brief Description	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Cost of Bid Documents	Date of Issuance of Bid Documents	Date of Pre-Bid Conference	Date of Submission/ Opening of Bids
1	9531	Portland Cement	P 95,000.00	P 175.00	February 19 to 26, 2007	February 27, 2007	March 13, 2007
2	9540	Supply of Brand New Submersible Motor	470,000.00	460.00	February 19 to 26, 2007	February 27, 2007	March 13, 2007
3	9536	Condura Aircon-Window Type	17,600.00	115.00	February 19 to 26, 2007	February 27, 2007	March 13, 2007
4	9566	PVC Pipe & Bends for Stock Replenishment	365,555.00	385.00	February 21 to 28, 2007	March 1, 2007	March 15, 2007
5	9533	GI Fittings for Stock Replenishment	130,000.00	205.00	February 21 to 28, 2007	March 1, 2007	March 15, 2007
6	9557 & 9568	Cast Iron Fittings for Stock Replenishment	600,663.00	600.00	February 21 to 28, 2007	March 1, 2007	March 15, 2007

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules & Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process of the Eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall be advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its reponsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT and inspect the Bidding documents at the address given below during office hours (8:00–5:00 p.m.).

All Bids must be accompanied by a ***Bid Security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's and Manager's Check in the amount of One Percent (1%) of the Approved Budget Cost.*** Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid Opening shall be at the 2nd Floor, ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT Main Office Building, Pilar St., Zamboanga City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time or prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Mr. Noel M. Kawaguchi
Pilar St., Zamboanga City 7000
Telephone No. (062) 991 1556
Email:
Fax: (062) 991-2799

(Sgd.) ARNULFO A. ALFONSO
BAC I Chairman

(PDI – February 23, 2007)

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City	Venue	Date	Time
Manila	New World Hotel	Feb. 24 - 25 March 10	10a-4p
Bagulo	Prince Plaza Hotel	Feb. 26	2p-7p
Angeles City	Holiday Inn	Feb. 27	12p-5:30p
Cebu	Marriott Hotel	March 3 - 4	10a-4p
Davao	Marco Polo Hotel	March 10 -11	10a-4p

IMPORTANT! Please don't forget to bring all of the following:

- Visa Screen Certification
- PRC License
- TOEFL/TSE/IELTS/CGFNS Exam Passers
- NCLEX/NBCOT/NPTE Exam Passers
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PNOC
Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1200 Taguig City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO, Tel. Nos. 893-6001 to 47/893-1320 Fax No.: 840-1575

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) and classified, at least, as Category B / IAC Medium, Sub-Category A, Specialty in General Engineering or General Building and must have completed within the last ten (10) years at least one contract for the civil, structural and mechanical /piping works which is similar to the contract under bidding amounting to at least 50% of the approved budget to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

Civil, Structural and Mechanical/Piping Works for the Construction of Mahanagdong "A" Condensate Disposal System
EDC 07-038

The approved budget is **PhP43,984,660.00** chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is **One Hundred Fifty (150)** Calendar Days.

Eligibility forms may be secured from the Contracts Administration Group (c/o Blanche F. Salvador) starting **February 23, 2007** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Pesos: Three Hundred (P300.00)**. The eligibility documents must be submitted to the Contracts Administration Group not later than **2:00 p.m. of March 5, 2007**. Bid documents shall be issued to eligible Contractors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Pesos: One Thousand (PhP1,500.00)**.

Site inspection will be conducted on **March 13, 2007** in Leyte. For the purpose of clarifying certain issues a pre-bid conference will be held on **March 16, 2007, 1:30 P.M.** at the BAC Pre-bid Room, Bldg. V, First Floor, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor, Building 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on March 28, 2007** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI–February 23, 2007)

HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION
Office of the President

NOTICE OF SALE

Please be informed that the following properties of the Home Guaranty Corporation are being offered for public bidding:

	PROPERTY LOCATION	TYPE	FLOOR AREA	LOT AREA	SELLING PRICE	REMARKS
1	B- 12 L- 2 Alfonso Village, Alapan, Imus Cavite	TH	40	48 80	460,900.00	Illegally Occupied
2	B-9 L-35 Alfonso Village, Alapan, Imus Cavite	TH	40	38	352,000.00	Vacant
3	B-12 L-5 Alfonso Village, Alapan, Imus Cavite	TH	40	90.90	540,100.00	Illegally Occupied
4	B-7 L-2 Alfonso Village, Alapan, Imus Cavite	TH	40	74	491,700.00	Illegally Occupied
5	B-18 L-27 Alfonso Village, Alapan, Imus Cavite	TH	40	38	374,000.00	Illegally Occupied
6	B-4 L-12 Alfonso Village, Alapan, Imus Cavite	TH	66	38	621,500.00	Illegally Occupied
7	B9 L2 Regatta Classics Ph. II-B, Anabu 2, Imus, Cavite	SA	33.5	53	374,000 00	Vacant
8	B1 L20, Regatta Classics Subd., Anabu, Imus, Cavite	SA	54	80	603,900 00	Illegally Occupied
9	B9 L3 Regatta Classics Ph. IIA, Anabu, Imus, Cavite	SA	54	80	757,900.00	Illegally Occupied
10	B8 L9 ACM Sherwood Homes, Anabu, Imus, Cavite	SA	42.56	76	496,100 00	Illegally Occupied
11	B6 L19 ACM Sherwood Homes, Anabu, Imus, Cavite	RH	32.24	47 5	323,400 00	Vacant
12	B3 L33, ACM Sherwoods, Anabu 2nd, Imus, Cavite	RH	34.25	47.5	344,300 00	Illegally Occupied
13	B10 L1 Mary Cris Homes Bo. Alapan Imus Cavite	SA	36	52	398,200 00	Illegally Occupied
14	B11L18 MaryCris Homes Ph. 2, Bucandala III, Imus, Cavite	RH	30	36	295,900 00	Illegally Occupied
15	B7 L24 MaryCris Homes, Phase 2, Bucandala, Imus, Cavite	RH	50	45	350,900.00	Illegally Occupied
16	B8 L4 Villa Elisa Subd., Anabu, Imus, Cavite	SA	52	66.5	627,000.00	Illegally Occupied
17	B8 L20 Villa Elisa Subd., Anabu, Imus, Cavite	SA	35.5	66.5	386,100 00	Vacant
18	B9 L26 Villa Elisa Subd., Imus, Cavite	SA	64	78.5	770,000 00	Illegally Occupied
19	B2 L33 Villa Elisa Subd.,Anabu,Imus, Cavite	RH	32	38	321,200.00	Illegally Occupied
20	B2 L7 Villa Elisa Subd., Anabu, Imus Cavite	SA	48.8	57	409,200 00	Illegally Occupied
21	B6 L30 Villa Elisa Subd., Anabu, Imus, Cavite	SA	40 5	66.5	437,800 00	Illegally Occupied
22	B11 L21 ACM Woodstock Subd., P 1, Alapan, Imus, Cavite	RH	36.75	36	372,900.00	Vacant
23	B12 L8 ACM Woodstock Homes, Alapan, Imus Cavite	RH	12.75	36	402,600.00	Illegally Occupied
24	Block 1 Lot 5 Kamagong St. Finasia Homes Subd. Cainta Rizal	House and Lot	74	168	962,500.00	Illegally Occupied
25	Block 20 Lot 15 San Pancrasio St. Finasia Homes Subd, Parañaque City	Lot only		470	3,102,000.00	Illegally Occupied
26	Block 20 Lot 17 San Pancrasio St.Finasia Homes Subd, Parañaque City	Lot only		562	3,709,200.00	Illegally Occupied
27	Block 43 Lot 5 San Escolastica Finasia Homes Subd. Parañaque City	Lot only		624	1,716,000 00	Illegally Occupied
28	Block 15 Lot 13 San Pancrasio St . Finasia Homes, Parañaque City	Lot only		592	3,907,200 00	Illegally Occupied
29	Block 15 Lot 14 San Pancrasio St . Finasia Homes, Parañaque City	Lot only		535	3,531,000.00	Illegally Occupied
30	Block 15 Lot 15 San Pancrasio St . Finasia Homes, Parañaque City	Lot only		522	3,445,200.00	Vacant
31	Block 15 Lot 16 San Pancrasio St . Finasia Homes, Parañaque City	Lot only		507	3,346,200 00	Vacant
32	Block 15 Lot 17 San Pancrasio St . Finasia Homes, Parañaque City	Lot only		492	3,247,200.00	Vacant
33	Block 15 Lot 18 San Pancrasio St . Finasia Homes, Parañaque City	Lot only		480	3,168,000.00	Vacant
34	Unit 3 EJAP Townhomes, Gen. Hizon St., Banlat, Tandang Sora, Q.C.	TH	76	48	1,180,300.00	Vacant
35	Block 5 Lot 15 IMC Homes, Camarin Road, Caloocan City	DX	44	84	472,000.00	Illegally Occupied
36	Block 7 Lot 4 IMC Homes, Camarin Road, Caloocan City	RH	35	40	286,000.00	Illegally Occupied

FOR INTERESTED PARTIES, PLEASE CALL HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION AT 896-04-25, 897-31-49 OR VISIT OUR HEAD OFFICE AT JADE BLDG. NO. 335 SEN. GIL PUYAT AVENUE, MAKATI CITY.

(Sgd.) RAFAEL P. DE LOS SANTOS
VICE PRESIDENT
ASSET MANAGEMENT AND
DISPOSITION GROUP

(PDI - February 23, 2007)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5389

PNOC
The Energy Company

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Control and Power Cables under GA-613064R1
Approved Budget PHP 6,609,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Mr. Winthrop Z. Gutierrez** starting **February 23, 2007**, from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P 400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **March 02, 2007, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department, Ground Floor, Building 5 at the above address, and thereafter, dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Office Wall Clock Time)** of **March 16, 2007**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI--Feb. 23, 2007)

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BUSINESS

Gov't sets aside ₱5B to trim bureaucracy

Early retirement packages to be offered to state workers

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS to spend P5 billion this year on further streamlining the bureaucracy.

The amount will be used to finance the retirement packages of government employees whose jobs would be deemed redundant.

The Department of Budget and Management said the government currently employs over a million workers, of which only a little over 2,000 went for early retirement last year.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. said the government intended to go full blast with the streamlining program despite the limited budget allocated by Congress to meet its goal of faster and more efficient operations.

Congress allotted only P1 billion for the rationalization program out of the national budget of P1.137 trillion for 2007, he said.

Andaya said the government could source the remaining P4 billion from its savings.

The DBM said the government was looking at reducing the manpower complement of 112 line agencies.

Close to 70 of these have already submitted their reorganization plans for approval.

"Actual spending for the streamlining program will be based on the number of employees who will volunteer to be retired," Andaya said.

The government started the rationalization program last year, and plans to go full blast this year.

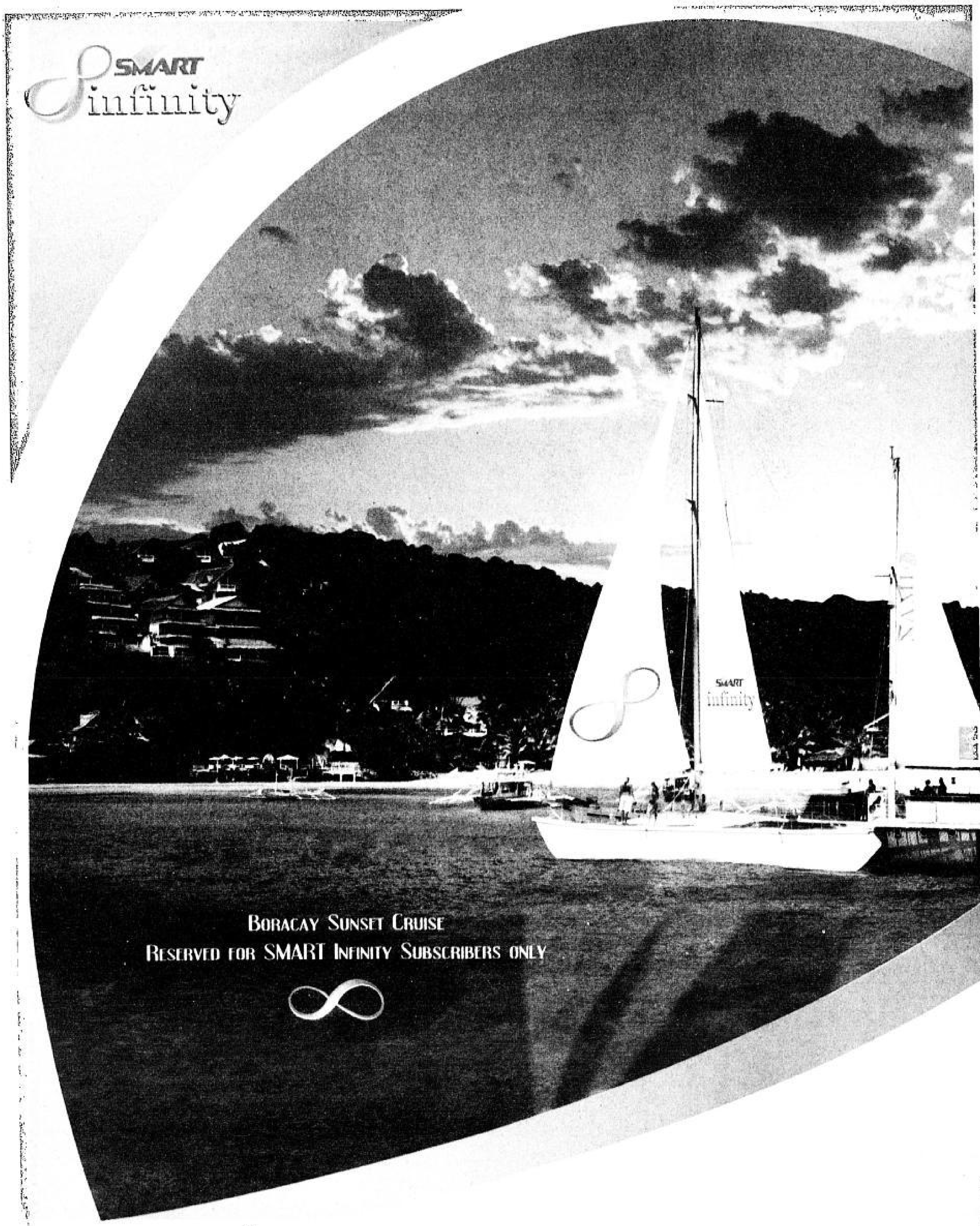
Reducing the bloated bureaucracy was one of the measures recommended to help the government save on its meager funds.

The DBM said the government saved P266 million in salaries from due to last year's rationalization program.

After reducing its budget deficit to P62.2 billion last year from the previous year's P146.8 billion, the government intends to limit its deficit to P63 billion this year and balance the budget by 2008.

Last year, the government spent P543 billion out of its P1.041-trillion total spending to fund the operation of line agencies.

The amount included the salaries of state workers.



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Keep open mind, WTO group told

By Christine A. Gaylican

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS asked government officials to keep a "flexible but cautious" stance when they meet today with visiting World Trade Organization director general Pascal Lamy.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said in an interview that he and other members of the economic team have been instructed "to keep an open mind for possible breakthroughs in the negotiations but not to waylay the country's national interest."

"The President would not want the Philippines to be an obstacle to world trade. But, at the same time, she wants us to bear in mind that [our stand] should be for our national interest," Yap said.

Yap said that the President knew about the critical trade mechanisms, such as the special safeguard mechanism (SSM) and the special products (SP), being pushed by the Philippines and the other members of the Group of 33 developing countries at the WTO.

Agriculture Undersecretary Segfredo Serrano, the country's head of delegation for agriculture policies in the WTO, said in a previous interview that the Philippines and the G33 have been pleading their case on the need for developing countries to reduce duties on sensitive agricultural products at their own pace.

Lamy, however, had said that the position of the G33 on agriculture was "a major stumbling block" to the resumption of the stalled WTO talks.

Lamy is now urging participants in the recently resumed Doha Development Round negotiations to work on a compromise.

In a separate interview, civil society groups led by Walden Bello's Focus on the Global South and R1 Rice Action Network expressed grave concern over Lamy's perceived move to "soften" the stand of the Philippines and Indonesia on the trade mechanisms.

"It would be a pity if the softening of the G33 position happens within Philippine territory when we, together with Indonesia are in the forefront of this fight," he said.

Consortium buys Malaysian stake in gaming firm

By Riza T. Olchondra

A CONSORTIUM OF LOCAL INVESTORS HAS bought an additional 12 percent stake in gaming firm IPVG Corp. from Malaysia's MBf group.

The sale of MBf shares was completed in a special block sale on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

IPVG said in a statement that the purchase "signified the consolidation and strengthening of the company's shareholder base and gives a clear indication of growing confidence among its local investors."

IPVG CEO Enrique Y. Gonzalez said the company closed 2006 with about P270 million in revenues, half of which came from its data center business and the other half from its online gaming ventures.

"Our growth will continue in 2007. We expect shifts in the revenue contribution profile as our contact center operation ramps up in 2007. This will also mean good growth numbers for shareholders across all our businesses," he said.

The MBf group is an affiliate of Malaysia-based MBF Corp. BHD, which is listed on the Bursa Malaysia.

The group's principal activities include promoting and selling timeshare, property and club memberships.

IPVG, meanwhile, is an information technology and interactive media company.

Its operating units include IP Interactive, IP Converge and IP-Contact Center.

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THURSDAY **FOOD** • FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

ANNA Bayle, the only Filipina supermodel, recently wrote an open letter to Chito Madrigal-Collantes and Peter Jentes in which she details the start of her career at Hyatt and thanks them both.

From the golden decades of Philippine fashion, Gary Flores, pioneer fashion director and choreographer, returns

GARY Flores GIL NARTEA

BAYLE

LIFE-STYLED
Thelma Sioson San Juan

Fashion sees its biggest homecoming

BY THE TIME YOU read this column this morning, we should already be nursing a hangover from last night's emotional—if not alcoholic—indulgence.

For last night, in the Makati home of society priestess Chito Madrigal-Collantes, was held a "fashion moment," the type Manila hadn't seen in a long time.

Last night was a rare reunion of fashion models, designers, and denizens of the '70s and '80s—the golden decades of Philippine fashion that saw the emergence of young style geniuses. Fiercely competitive, they have since become the country's foremost designers.

It was a grand reunion straight out of "Hyatt"—Hyatt because it was in the hotel on Roxas Boulevard that fashion shows were held daily from the '70s to the early '80s.

The fashion series was held during lunch, so that fashion-watching became the habit not only of young ladies and not-so-young matrons and fashion bohemians, but also of businessmen who did shop talk and made their deals as statuesque models in beautiful clothes sauntered on the runway around them.

The Hyatt glory years were relived during last night's reunion, which was held in honor of Collantes, Peter Jentes and Gary Flores.

Social directress

Back in the 1970s, Collantes was Hyatt's social directress responsible for enticing designers to show what they got in the hotel, which was competing with the Hilton and the InterCon.

Jentes, on the other hand, was Hyatt's dynamic general manager who would later settle down in the Philippines, marry Hyatt's foremost model, Minnie Cagatao, and become a force to reckon with in the hotel and restaurant scene.

A few kilometers away from Hyatt, on UN Avenue, was a tough competitor, the Hilton, which had its own society doyenne leading the marketing onslaught in the five-star hotel wars: the famous Conching Sunico, who was the organizer of the Karilagan shows at the Top of the Hilton. (Interestingly, Sunico is now known as the socialite who "discovered and made" Boy Abunda.)

Hyatt was giving the breaks to young "unknowns" such as Gang Gomez (now the Benedictine monk Dom Martin), Joe Salazar, Auggie Cordero, Inno Sotto, Larrie Silva (and the other Larry, Larry Leviste), Rusty Lopez and Chito Vijandre.

In contrast, "Tita" Conching's Hilton was making waves with fashion stalwarts Pitoy Moreno and Ben Farrales.

Covering this highly stimulating and competitive scene were the vanguards of features journalism (features covered fashion and society, for there was no official lifestyle beat then). The vanguards included Letty Jimenez Magsanoc, who would later cross over to political journalism and become an influential editor.

I was just out of school, a novice editor learning how to cover the colorful fashion and social scene, my jaw dropping in awe, and my nerves wrangled. My editors terrorized me; they butchered my copy—and justifiably so.

It was the greatest learning time of my career. They were seminal years of fashion and lifestyle in the country, and the daily fashion shows taught me how to write fashion. Hardly did I realize that what I was learning to cover would be the foundation of modern and post-modern Philippine lifestyle.

Gary Flores

That was why when Tonichi Nocom told me last Monday that Flores had just flown in from Virginia to grace the reunion, I dropped everything for an interview.

We were welcomed to the newly refurbished executive suite of Dusit Hotel by Celine Magat Lopez, a top model during those golden years. She was keeping Flores, whom she considers her mentor, company.

Flores wasn't only a mentor to Celine and the famous models of the country (Bessie Badilla, Wanda Louwallien, Menchu Menchaca Soriano, to name a few).

If Philippine fashion had a god at the time, it was Flores. (Curiously, now, when I called him "god," he cringed in embarrassment.)

Gary pioneered fashion direction and choreography in the country. He could make or break the careers of fashion designers and models. He had the power and, more important, the talent.

During our interview, Tonichi and Leviste (thank god, an elephantine memory goes with that elephantine weight) recalled how the likes of Joey Espino and other young aspiring directors

FASHION SEES/ C4

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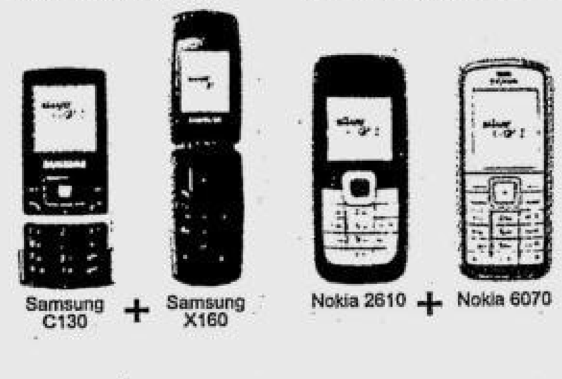

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DAHIL SMART TAYO

GOLDEN Boy Bonito Singson with daughter Althea and wife Yuriko Jacinto; Jessi, Gelo and Iñigo Singson

GOLDEN Boy Iñigo Zobel with daughter Bianca and wife Maricris Cardenas, and Jake Zobel

40-KARAT PALS. Pops Fernandez and Anton San Diego

Best of the best

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

LAST YEAR WENT FASTER THAN YOU could bat an eyelash and, believe me, it left me on a roll with great memories. So I'm picking out the key weddings, birthdays, resorts, restaurants, product launchings and individuals who made an impact in Cosmopolitan Manille's 2006 social. calendar, *palanggas*.

Stephanie Zubiri and Frenchman **Victor Delfour**. Their fairy-tale love story became a reality when the beautiful couple exchanged "I do's" in a quaint chapel in the outskirts of Toulouse in France. Their wedding was attended by 300 A-listers from the French and Philippine social set. The *tres* chic cocktails and candlelight dinner were held at the gorgeous sprawling estate of the groom's father in Toulouse.

Kristine M. Ochoa and British-educated **Robert J. Arenas** professed their vows of love in an atmosphere of restrained splendor. The wedding had a power-packed set of 25 principal sponsors. It was topped with an elegant dinner at the ballroom of Mandarin Oriental Manila, where 500 invitees wished the young couple the best of everything.

Rustan's unmatchable **Rhoda Campos** and her dashing Spaniard, **Vince Aldanese**, said their "till death do us part." The groom wept uncontrollably and the always composed bride smiled demurely during their Christian wedding at the Quezon Ballroom of Shangri-La Makati. The magical, simply unforgettable wedding was witnessed by 250 close pals and relatives of the couple.

Joy Marie Woolbright and **Giancarlo Sotto**'s wedding was the culmination of a beautiful seven-year romance. Tons of political personas and hot namedroppables from Cebu acted as principal sponsors. Reception was at Le Pavillon for their 600 invitees, with celebrity chef **Billy King**'s French Corner doing the food, which had the guests raving.

Best birthdays

International polo player and businessman **Iñigo Urquijo Zobel** celebrated the Big 50 at the popular Pearl of the Pacific Resort in Boracay, with 300 guests jetting in from Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

Breakfast was served for those who couldn't tear themselves away from the fun happening, dahlings.

Popular business magnate and art collector **Bonito Singson** blew out 50 candles before 600 hundred invitees from the world of politics, business, high society and his Atenean classmates.

The superbly prepared dinner at Le Soufflé in The Fort had the guests going back for seconds and thirds. They drowned the food with endless champagne, wine and hard liquor.

Young Ilocos Norte Gov. **Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos II** celebrated his 49th birthday with a big bash at the Legazpi Function Room and poolside of Hotel InterContinental Manila.

An achiever as a public servant, Bongbong had the time of his life that night and enjoyed every minute of it as he mingled with guests, danced and sang songs by his favorite group, The Beatles, together with the Bloomfields band that looked and sounded just like the Beatles.

Philippine Tatler's editor in chief **Anton San Diego** and his schoolmate and true pal, Concert Queen **Pops Fernandez**, had one of the best birthday bashes of the year, turning the Conway of Shangri-La Makati into the chic-est club. A mix of society's young guards and movie stars had a grand time together till way past 3 a.m., dahlings.

And if *moi* may so, also fantastic was my birthday party at the third level of Shangri-La Makati. The place was converted into one those private chic clubs one finds in New York, Los Angeles and London. The guests were a mixture of all ages, and were all true pals of mine. They danced and had a fabulous time. It definitely was a great ending for the year, *palanggas*.

Best events

The *tres* elegant fifth anniversary ball of Philippine Tatler at the ballroom of Shangri-La Makati was attended by 600 A-listers of Cosmo Manille's *alta sociedad*.

The Peninsula Manila marked a super glitzy 30th anniversary celebration in its grand lobby. It was attended by 1,000 jet-setters who flew in from all over Asia; they sipped the endless flow of Vevue Clicquot Champagne.

Love 14's yearly ball honoring five new young Misses of the year was held at the Shangri-La Makati's ballroom. The chosen ladies would do charity tours for a year.

Then there was the visit of son of Princess **Caroline** of Monaco, **Andrea Casiraghi**. He made headlines by visiting the charity projects funded by his mom's philanthropic foundation. His visit was covered even by the foreign press and tons of pages were devoted to the visit by the French media and the Spanish magazine *Hola!*

Best launchings

Nivea held an awesome launch of its new product at the paradise-like Panglao resort in Bohol. It was attended by over 100 celebrities and high-society members who enjoyed the sand, sea and sun.

The launching of the Philippine Tatler Magazine in Iloilo had members of the Southern gentry flocking to the beautifully decorated ballroom of the popular Amigo Hotel.

Metro Society Magazine held its Davao launch at the world-class Pearl Farm. Some 400 of the city's sleek set were in full attendance, *palanggas*.

The best new florist was southern gent **Robert Blancaflor**, who could brilliantly do wonders out of a plain cold ballroom.

Another top new florist was gourmand **Margarita Fores**, who expanded her talents from the kitchen to flower arrangements, which even included fresh veggies and ostrich eggs, among other eye-catching creations.

Super high-end Amanpulo resort, where you could bump into royalty and international movie stars, was the year's best resort.

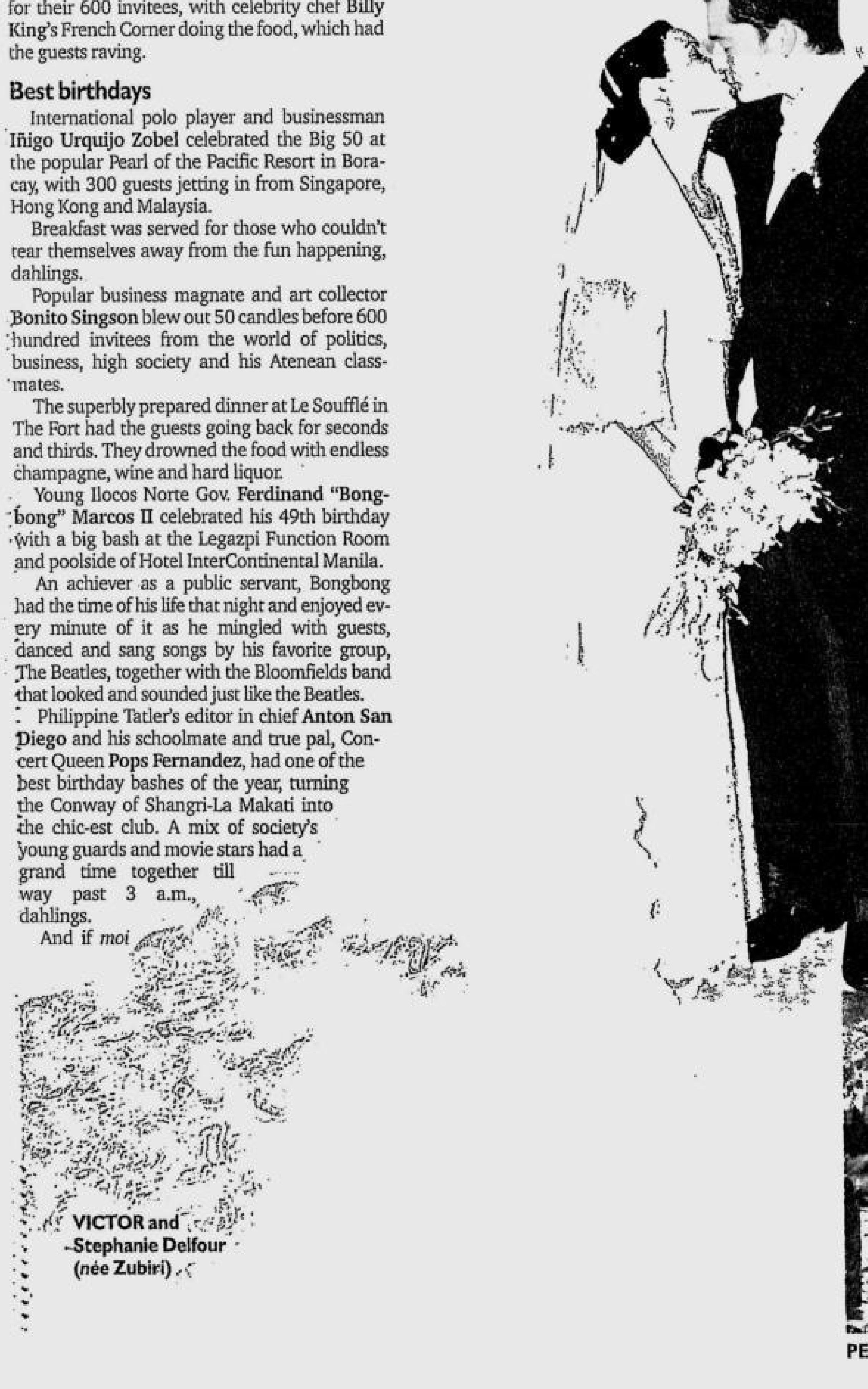
Another great resort was Pearl of Pacific in Boracay, which has the best spa and hair salon right on the beach. It had a great variety of rooms, held some of the best events in the year, and organized the best fireworks display on New Year's eve.

Another great Boracay place was Asya, a resort of simple elegance. It had fabulous rooms, a cool, lush ambiance and excellent service.

El Nido Resort in Palawan was also high up there. It was postcard-perfect and an ideal vacation place. It was named among 12 finalists "of the world's best in travel and tourism development."

GIANCARLO and Joy Marie Woolbright Sotto

KRISTINE Ochoa and Roberto Arenas

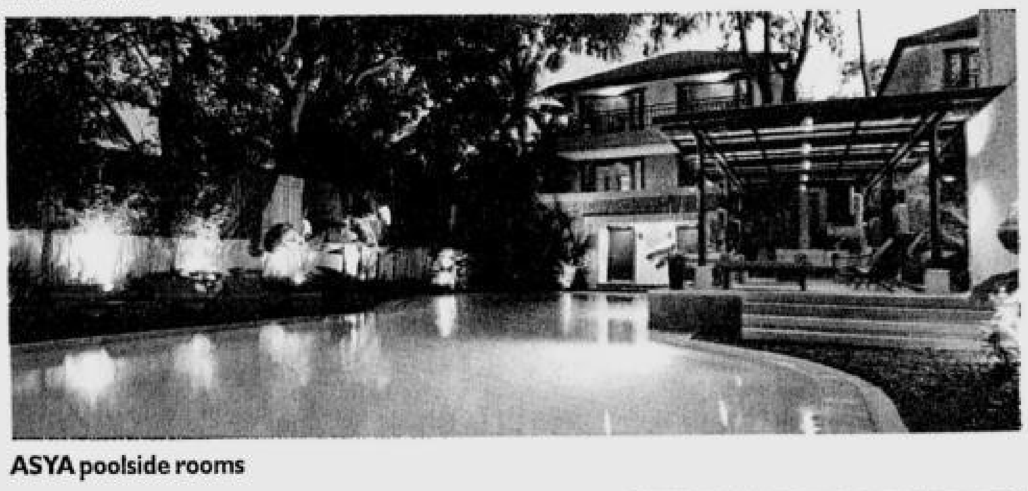


VICTOR and Stephanie Delfour (née Zubiri)

YOUNG royal Andrea Casiraghi with Virlanie children

GOV. Bongbong Marcos blows 49 years away.

LOVE 14 Manila's Five Loveliest: Chinna Juban, Charisse Abalos, Jill Bunaguen, Mila Zamora and Ysa Villar



ASYA poolside rooms

PEARL of the Pacific beach front

FLOWER arrangement by Margarita Fores

Underwear fair ends Feb. 28

THE ROBINSONS DEPARTMENT STORE'S (RDS) month-long Underwear Fair is ongoing until Feb. 28. The fair features a wide array of undergarments for women and men. Discounts of up to 50 percent are offered in all RDS branches. RDS (www.rds.com.ph) branches are at Robinsons Malls, Waltermart Malls, Tutuban Center, Metropolis Star and Festival Mall in Alabang; Nepo Mall Pampanga and Dagupan, Pangasinan; and Limketkai Mall, Cagayan de Oro City.

GOINGS ON

LOONEY TUNES WEEKENDS. Cartoon characters Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and Marvin, with Tweety, Taz, and Sylvester, take center stage in "Lights, Camera Showtime!" Ayala Malls play host to Bugs Bunny and friends for consecutive weekends beginning today and ending March 18. Weekend fun with Looney Tunes characters begin 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 6 p.m., Feb. 23-25 at Glorietta Activity Center. At 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 6 p.m., March 2-4, performances will be at the Alabang Town Center Activity Center. The show moves to Market! Market! Activity Center 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., March 9-11. The final weekend will be at the Ayala Activity Center Cebu at 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 6 p.m., March 16-18.

HARDWARE FAIR. Handyman's Hardware Fair, Big Ideas Simple Solutions, opens today and will be ongoing until March 10.

Offering the widest array of hardware items and products for the home, it will be held simultaneously at mall activity areas of Robinsons Place Pioneer, Mandaluyong City; Robinsons Metro East, Robinsons Place Novaliches and Robinsons Starmills Pampanga. The fair will also offer free product demonstrations and workshops. A Builders' Sale, offering discounts of up to 50 percent on featured merchandise, will be held in all Handyman Do It Center branches at Robinsons Starmills Pampanga, Robinsons Pioneer, Robinsons Novaliches, Nepo Mall Dagupan, Limketkai Mall Cagayan de Oro and in Handyman Do It Best Home Center in Robinsons Place Metroeast. (Tel. 3955249 or 6350751 loc. 159; www.handyman.com.ph; e-mail info@handyman.com.ph)

RELAY FOR LIFE. THE Philippine Cancer Society will hold Feb. 23 the third Relay for Life, in cooperation with the American Cancer Society (ACS). The event will be capped by an 18-hour overnight camp-out Feb. 23-24, at the Amoranto Stadium, Quezon City. Different teams will set up tents inside the oval. Team members will take turns walking, jogging or running around the oval. A candle-lighting ceremony led by cancer survivors will mark the start of the relay. Organizers of Relay for Life 2007 can be reached at 7343114 or 7342127; e-mail pcsi@philcancer.com.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER. Another Marriage Encounter (ME) weekend seminar will be held March 9-11, at the St. Bridget's Convent, Magasawang Ilat, Tagaytay City. The event is sponsored by the Reaching Out for the Lord (ROL) Series of the Tuklasan Sector-Marriage Encounter Foundation of the Philippines. Spearheaded by Raymond and Nao Checa, and their ROL 24 classmates, the live-in weekend seminar is for married couples seeking fulfillment and rejuvenation in their marriages. It also aims to help participants redirect their relationship to be Christ-centered. The ecclesial team will be composed of Rev. Fr. Jess V. Fernandez, S.J.; Rudy and Menie. Ledesma and Domeng and Lui Alagde. ROL members' numbers are 0918-9119680, 0918-9119672 or 8715141; 0915-5496035, 7314868, 7408816; and 7408627, 0919-4488038. Deadline for registration/reservation is March 5, 2007. Seminar fee is P2,600 per couple.

VALUE FOR MONEY SIMS. At only P59, the Super Value SIM is the economical SIM from Sun Cellular. It is packed with 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited capability for two days and 10 free text allocation to other networks. Sun's Power SIM (P99), on the other hand, provides four days Call and Text Unlimited to other Sun subscribers and 15 free texts to other networks. And for subscribers who want the best value-for-money deal, Sun Cellular's Supreme SIM includes free 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited for seven days and 30 free texts to other networks. As a bonus, each Sun SIM gives you an additional 20 free texts per month with at least P100 load during the previous month. You can earn free texts every month for the next 11 months. Call 3958000 or visit www.suncellular.com.ph.

LADIES' FAIR. Sta. Lucia East Department Store is holding its annual Ladies' Fair with discounts of up to 50 percent, until Feb. 28. A spa treat worth P5,000 and gift pack from Secosana will be raffled off in the Love to Shop raffle promo. Every P500 single purchase receipt from participating ladies' brands entitles a shopper to a raffle coupon. Three winners will be drawn and each will take home these prizes. Call 6815181.

REGISTRATION FOR SUZUKI CONFAB. The Third Asia Suzuki Method Conference will be held May 3-7, at La Salle Greenhills. Deadline for registration is Feb. 28. A project of the Philippine Suzuki Association, in cooperation with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), the conference is open to students, parents and teachers in piano, violin, cello, flute and guitar. Fee of P5000 covers all concerts, lunches and group lessons. Those who will register after Feb. 28 will be charged an additional P300. Call 7240705 and 7242543.

TOWN FIESTA
Malipangpang, San Ildefonso, Bulacan, recently celebrated the feast day of Our Lady of Santo Rosario. Olivia Ammen, assisted by husband Allen, was *hermana mayor*. The two-day fiesta featured masses, a raffle, games and variety shows.

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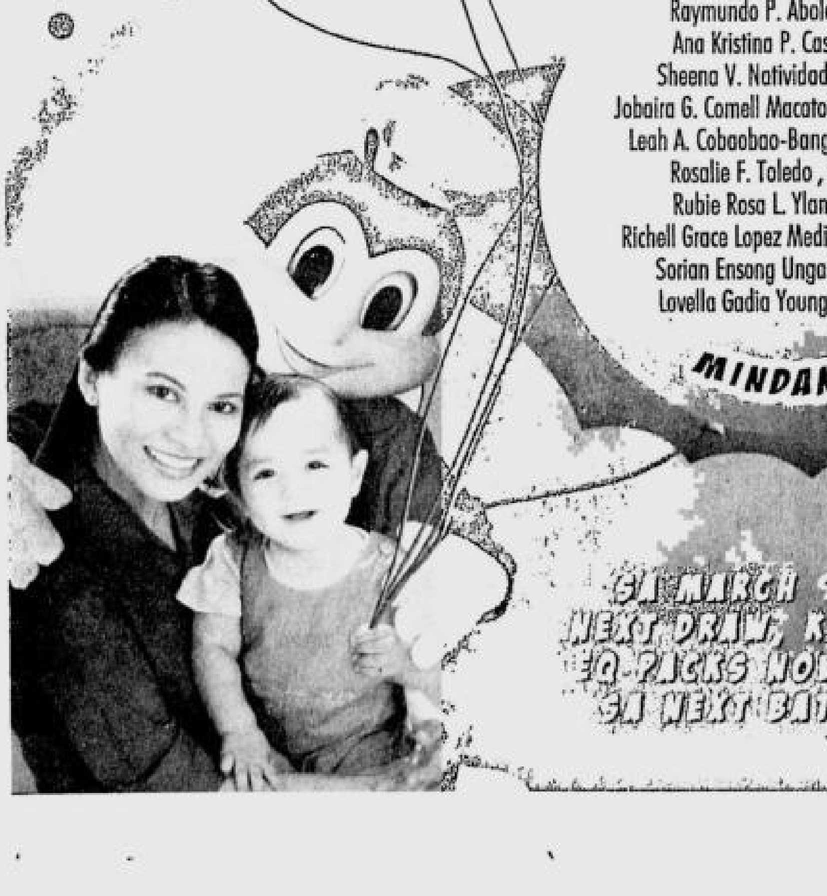
Sorian Ensong Ungas, Zamboanga City
Lovella Gadia Young, Misamis Oriental



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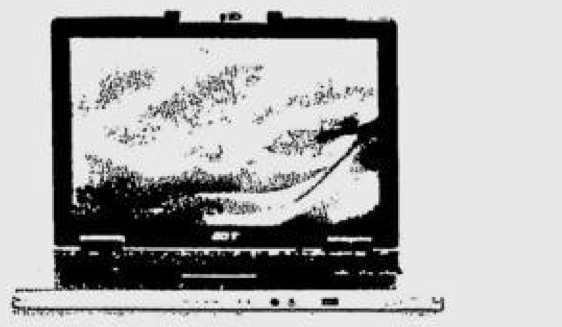

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Green is the new black

DITA SANDICO-ONG, A staunch environmental advocate for many years now, has been luring in her customers with not only her fashion-forward take on natural, indigenous fabrics, but also her firm values in eco-friendly living.

This year marks another stride in her cause toward eco-conscious fashions. Fashioned from such organic fabrics as banana and piña, her wraps are a modern alternative to the synthetic creations that currently swamp the fashion industry.

These are pieces that you can wear over and over, in countless ways, creating a completely new look for every occasion.

Go voluminous for an evening fete, twisting and puffing up the sleeves for an ultramodern take on the terno. Or keep it subtle for a dinner out with friends, shaping it into a halter vest that skims the body ever so slightly.

The packaging may have changed, but the underlying values remain the same. Still at its core are living in tune with nature and fostering a harmonious partnership with the environment. It is all about educated choices that are environmentally sound and aware. Instead of plastic-bagging your groceries, for example, wrap them up in reusable canvas tote bags. Substitute that chemically loaded face cream with nature's own remedies. Swap that scratchy Lycra top with an organic, home-grown cotton tee.

Eco-living is here to stay. Don't let this be a passing fad to be tossed into storage along with your bellbottoms and shoulder-padded jackets, only to be resurrected when the time is deemed right again. Make it a personal choice. Choose right. Go green.

Dita Sandico-Ong's latest collection may be viewed at her shop at 35 Wilson St., Greenhills, and at Rustan's Makati and Rustan's Shangri-La Tower. Call 7267260 or 7265102.

BANANA wrap with exaggerated terno sleeves, *banray* corset and skirt, and piña and banana accessories

LUKOT wrap, banana obi belt, taffeta corset, velvet skirt, and piña and banana accessories

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Fashion sees its biggest homecoming

From page C1

would literally wait in the wings to watch Gary's direction, and to then sneak in and look at his sequence sheets.

By showing the country that there could be a career (and fortune) in fashion direction, Gary paved the way for the likes of Jackie Aquino and Robbie Carmona (whose father, Derek, by the way, was among Gary's top models).

That afternoon at Dusit, the memories came flooding in to light up Gary's eyes. I could see his eyes welling up in tears during some moments. Gary's mere presence was enough to intimidate us then. But when I asked him at Dusit if he had mellowed, he replied, "I should hope so."

He's flying back to Virginia today, while you're reading this, because he must be back at work for a marketing campaign. He is manager for fragrances and men's furnishings of Lord & Taylor. He works on the floor, and has business targets and projections—a universe totally different from that which he left here in 1986.

Nice treasure chest

"That part of my life (the '70s, '80s fashion) is stored as a nice treasure here," he said, pointing to his chest.

"But after Mass every day (yes, Gary now goes to daily Mass), when I take a walk, I listen to 'tapes' of my fashion shows and remember the happy things."

At the mention of the "tapes," Larry and Tonichi raved about the music of Gary's shows. They said the shows were distinguished by their music. They particularly remembered "Chuck Mangione, African Symphony…" They went on and on about the Gary Flores music.

A Gary Flores show stood out for its music, energy, grace, and the seamless blending between spectacle and clothes—just what fashion direction should be.

Gary was a copywriter of Grant Advertising in Hong Kong when he accidentally strayed into fashion direction. His agency was mounting a campaign for Revlon in HK when he was tapped to mount a fashion show. Before long, he—and the rest of Manila—discovered that he had the talent for fashion production.

The artistic talent shouldn't have come as a surprise. His father was Beer Flores, a stalwart in television (writer of the legendary TV and radio series "Tang Tarangtang"), and his aunt, the society columnist Lina Flor.

Larry butted in that Gary was shaping up fashion direction locally around the time that world fashion was discovering choreography, not just straight modeling, as manifested by the grand shows of the likes of Halston.

"I would see the fashion shows at the Botica Boie in Escolta and tell myself I wanted a piece of that dream," Gary said.

While Hilton's Karilagan was mostly cultural, Gary created shows that were more attuned to fashion, using models, not only society girls, and introducing compensation for models, an innovation that Jentes did. That was how the professionalization of the modeling industry began.

GARY Flores

Full training

Celine Magat Lopez recalled how modeling for Gary wasn't only a strut on the runway. "He taught you how to move, from your toes to your hands and face, how to take off a jacket, let it slide, and how to hold it," she said.

More than that, he also trained models how to mingle with the social set and how to behave in parties. They weren't allowed to wear jeans in parties; they weren't even allowed to tag along their boyfriends to rehearsals.

In time, First Lady Imelda Marcos tapped Gary Flores. He had coined the name Bagong Anyo for the collections of the top designers, and the collections were toured worldwide by Imelda.

To give you an idea how fashion was thriving then: Gary would do two luncheon shows daily (in two hotels) and three gala shows a month. In such frenetic environment, fashion designers and models honed their craft.

Gary's creative collaboration with the designers was enviable. He sat down with them for the concepts, matched the model with the clothes. He made it a point to see the actual clothes; only after seeing the clothes would he start doing his cue sheets.

In 1986, after the fall of the Marcoses, Gary thought it was time to join his father in the US, and end his estrangement from him. Even before Gary could leave Manila, his father had died. But he migrated nonetheless.

In Virginia, he got to work as personal assistant to one of the wealthiest couples there, David and Susan Hillman, who realized Gary's ability to plan parties.

He was also one of the most sought-after step-aerobics instructor there until he landed the Lord & Taylor job.

Gary was emotional about his homecoming, his first in over 10 years. "Everything is just good memory for me," he said.

LOPEZ, Flores and Lingling Gonzales

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FASHION
Everything's in bloom

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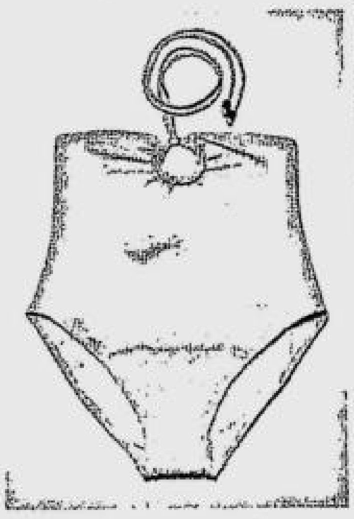

SUMMER must-haves /D3

SHORT and sweet dresses for summer /D2

girls night in
Opt for glam, go for mod
Cool buys on night stuff!

MY SCENE
2-pc stretch racer back top and brief
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GIRLS CO. soft cotton starter bras
specials 69.75 ea

DISNEY
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0657, Series of 2007.

Sweet days of summer

Sweet surrender. Belted gray bubble dress

Get ready to get playful with this season's blooms!

Mabuhay!

Jenni Epperson

THERE IS A SONG THAT'S playing in the speakers in my mind. It's "Summer Breeze." Turn up the volume with me and take in the lyrics: "Sweet days of summer, the jasmine's in bloom."

It reminds me of what summer is really all about, and it's more than just the sweltering heat: a certain playfulness in the air, a feeling that, like the song, "everything's all right."

Summer, after all, is the season that celebrates sweet, restless youth, a time filled with those lazy, happy afternoons out in the sun.

Yes, the life of leisure awaits. So what to wear on those long, sunlit days? I say keep it chic and sexy—just because the temperatures are soaring doesn't mean you have to shed your style sense along with your heavier clothes.

During these sweet days of summer, jasmines are not the only things in bloom. Think tulip dresses as well, along with bubbles and other playful elements.

I discovered a collection of such outfits in Jellybean, one of the fastest-growing brands in the metro.

I think of Jellybean as a style playground, where you get to dress up and match those stilettos and sneakers with dresses and shorts. The playful Jellybean Collection features bubble, tulip and shift dresses in taffeta, and micro shorts and skirts in fabrics that range from jersey, stretch to metallic. These threads go out the extra limb to emphasize your body length. To show off those long, tanned legs, try on the hemlined dresses and shorts.

T-shirts are dressed up in flirtier, playful styles with creative sleeve and neck details. Paired with cropped vests, puff-sleeve jackets and accentuated by leather cinch belts, their simplicity is of another exciting level.

Apart from showcasing exquisite style, the Jellybean Summer 2007 Collection promises exclusive designs, meaning only limited pieces of every style are available.

Get ready to get playful with this season's blooms. "Summer breeze, makes me feel fine!"

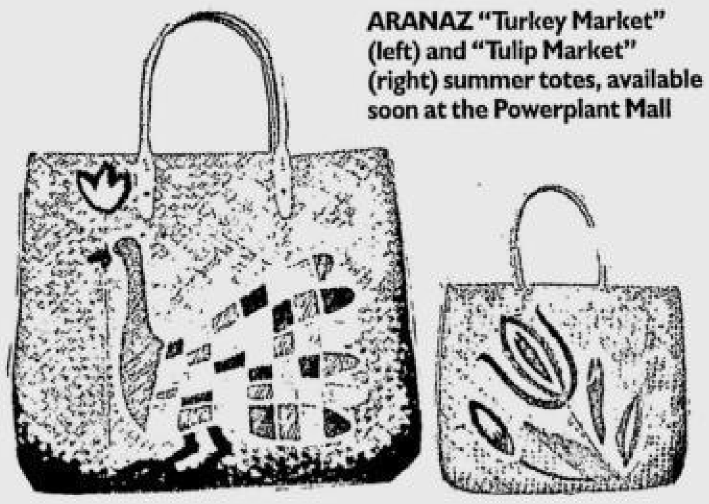
E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

Photography Sara Black
Makeup Gigi Uson for Shu Uemura
Model Giselli of T-Models
Clothes Jellybean
Megamall Building A
Soon to open in Robinsons Galleria
and Ayala Trinoma

[illegible]
Printed V-neck dress

Saccharine treat.
Cotton dress with puff sleeves

Lollipop love.
Cotton polo shirt and checkered tulip skirt



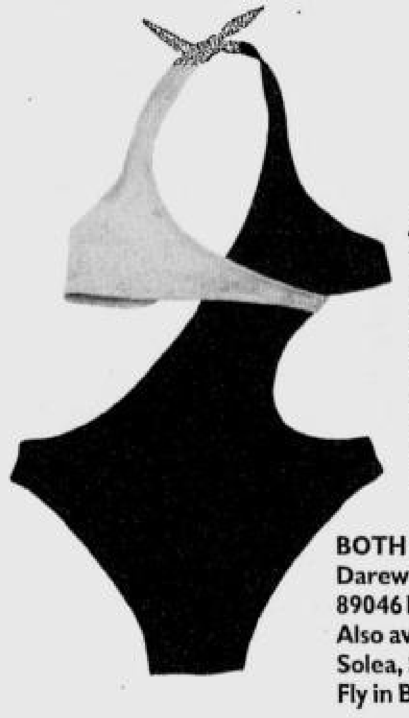
ARANAZ "Turkey Market" (left) and "Tulip Market" (right) summer totes, available soon at the Powerplant Mall

Big summer bag

You'll definitely need a big bag to carry around all your essentials, sun block and kitchen sink included! Check out Aranaz's oversized and craft-y straw summer totes that measure a good 16 x 18 inches. It's even splashed with largely proportioned graphic embroidery for that artisan feel.

Dare to bare in dainty little dresses or short and sassy playsuits in playfully bright colors and prints. Take inspiration from the spring/summer 2007 collections of Pucci whose pieces are covered with 60's-inspired psychedelic prints; Versace's standout sunshiny yellow babydoll dress; or Stella McCartney's graphic print jersey playsuit, which is both fun and fashionable.

STELLA McCartney graphic-print playsuit (left); Pucci printed jumpsuit (right)



Maillot mania

The itsy-bitsy teeny bikini is unabashedly sexy and the right gear when getting a tan, but this summer, why not try a one-piece suit with strategic cut outs that can show off your assets while disguising your flaws? Check out Risque Darewear by Cheryll Angeles for a start!

BOTH maillots from Risque Darewear by Cheryll Angeles, 8904611/ 8994823/ 09176225131. Also available at Chocolate outlets, Solea, SyKat Couture, Bombproof, Fly in Boracay and Spruce in Cebu

Sun and sand essentials

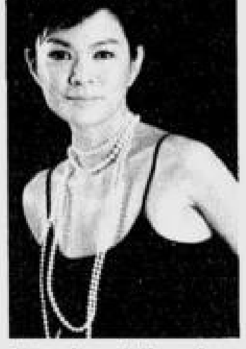
SUMMER IS FAST approaching, and with it comes numerous outings to the beach to worship the sun. Time to gear up for what promises to be a scorching hot summer (in more ways than one!) by the sea. Nobody should hit the beach empty-handed, after all.

Here are some summer essentials that you should consider:

Email the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

Time to gear up for what promises to be a scorching hot summer by the sea

APPLES' PICKINGS



Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

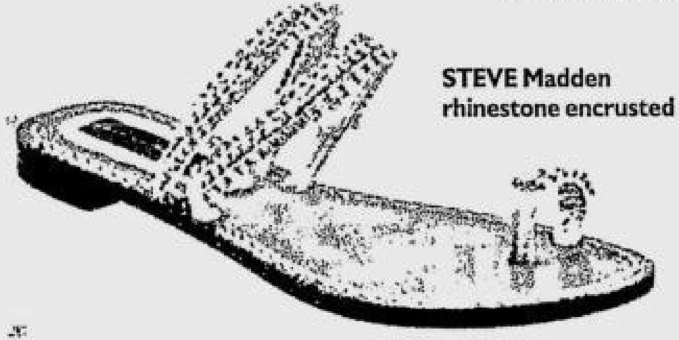
Look stylish while protecting your eyes from the bright rays of the sun by wearing sunglasses. There are a lot of varieties to choose from to suit every personality and face shape. Take your cue from celebrities like Kate Moss, Sienna Miller, Paris Hilton, Victoria Beckham, or Audrey Hepburn and Jackie O, to name a few.

SIENNA Miller wears sporty goggle-like glasses (above); Kate Moss in chic oversized, bug-eyed sunglasses (left)

Bejeweled sandals

Flip flops are comfy, casual and fun, but it's time to add a touch of individuality and glamour to your summer wardrobe by donning bejeweled or embellished flat sandals. You can wear these encrusted footwear any which way—with your swimwear and cover-up while in a resort, or with a flowing evening gown for a more dressy occasion.

ANDREW Gn white jewel-encrusted thongs



STEVE Madden rhinestone encrusted sandals

STEP 1:
Protect with Huile Genereuse

STEP 2:
Shampoo with Bain Apres Soleil

STEP 3:
Moisturize with Gelee Fraiche

Sun shield

Protect your hair and skin from the sun's damaging rays. It's always best to wear a wide-brimmed hat, but for added protection, try these:

For your hair:

Searching for that perfect antidote to dry and brittle tresses? Try Kerastase's Soleil line of hair-care products to shield your hair against the sun's UV rays, salt and chlorine. During sun exposure, make sure you apply Huile Genereuse to protect your hair against the damaging effects of the sun. Then, shampoo with the Bain Apres-Soleil (After-Sun Bath) and condition with Gelee Fraiche. All are especially formulated for colored hair.

For your skin:

Skin protection against the sun is a must to avoid premature ageing in the form of lines, wrinkles and spots. For optimal suncare defense, try Shiseido's Sun Protection line of products that promises ultimate skincare benefits. The products protect skin from the sun's UVA and UVB rays while repairing and preventing UV ray damage.

If you want to avoid the sun but crave for a golden sun-kissed glow, try Shiseido's Daily Bronze Moisturizing Emulsion, which can help you gradually achieve a self-tanning effect while nourishing skin.

FOR the eyes: Shiseido Sun Protection Eye Cream

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0659, Series of 2007

NAVARRO

ORTIZ

RODRIGUEZ

MADAMBA

DE LEON

FARRALES

Fashion as [illegible]

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

AS IF COMING UP WITH NEW twists on pieces inspired by certain periods in Philippine history wasn't hard enough, Barge Ramos and company were also expected by organizers of the recently concluded "Hiblang Filipina" fashion show to produce "elegant and decent" clothes that incorporated indigenous fabrics.

Designed to drum up interest in the 70th anniversary of women's suffrage in the Philippines, the dinner show at the Manila Hotel's Fiesta Pavilion gathered 14 of the country's top fashion designers, who presented their respective takes on clothes that harked as far back as the Spanish era.

Apart from the late Spanish era, other periods represented in the show were American Colonial, Commonwealth, Pre-war/post-war, the 1980s and, of course, the new millennium.

So that their works wouldn't overlap with one another, the designers agreed to group themselves into threes or twos per period.

In fairness to the designers, many of them were able to deliver the goods despite such limitations. Not a few were also able to make the most out of the friendly showdown by reaffirming their respective design sensibilities.

While the likes of Garimon Roferos and Federico Navarro chose the intricate route by fashioning long numbers adorned with a great deal of embroidery, fabric manipulation and beadwork, JC Buendia, Randy Ortiz, Joji Lloren and Rajo Laurel stuck to their guns with wearable and minimally embellished pieces.

> **The 'Hiblang Filipina' fashion show gathered 14 of the country's top designers with their respective takes on clothes that harked as far back as the Spanish era**

Slim silhouettes

Roferos (who interpreted fashion in the Commonwealth era) was in his element as he presented a number of gowns and dresses with slim silhouettes that emphasized the female figure.

The Davao-based designer also incorporated banana fibers—with mixed results—and cultured pearls from Mindanao in a number of his dresses. He likewise used certain indigenous materials to embellish a black-and-white number.

Ramos (Commonwealth) also zeroed in on the female figure with pieces that either outlined the body or showed plenty of skin. In fact, he featured a two-piece number consisting of a midriff (in the form of a *panuelo*) and low-slung pants for the ultra slim and brave.

Like most of his colleagues, Ramos employed a collage of materials in his "party" collection—the era, after all, was synonymous to weekly, sometimes even nightly, parties—such as hand-painted *jusi*, dyed piña, stretched tulle, silk jacquard and embroidered cotton.

Buendia (American Colonial) channeled the Edwardian flavor evident in outfits worn by the Thomasites and came up with tailored red-and-black voile and cotton separates—including several beaded short shorts!—embellished with big bows and brooches.

Laurel (post-war) opted for a "light and airy" collection of pink and peach dresses inspired by the 1950s' movie studio system. Apart from emphasizing the waist, the designer made use of iconic accessories such as black wrist-length gloves and fascinators.

Alas, in his desire to make his pieces wearable, Laurel failed to come up with a single Gloria Romero moment—a drop-dead ball gown perhaps that would have defined a period when women were beginning to rediscover glamour and luxury after being deprived for so long during the war. Where's your sense of fashion history, Rajo?

Thus, his modest dresses—although not bad in themselves—suffered in comparison to his colleagues' more intricate and larger-than-life numbers fit for carnival queens.

Striking yet wearable

But as Ortiz (American Colonial) and Lloren (Spanish) showed, wearable and plain need not be synonymous.

Ortiz combined such materials as wool crepe and embroidered taffeta, which he infused with embroidered piña *hablon* and *abel Iloco*, to fashion striking yet wearable tailored separates for men and women.

In keeping with the period, Ortiz incorporated peplums, capelets and serpentine skirts in his arsenal of silhouettes. The overall look, although inspired by the past, was very now.

Lloren also capitalized on his mastery of tailoring to produce contemporary and "empowered" numbers inspired by a turn-of-the-century Maria Clara. He chucked delicate fabrics such as piña and *jusi* in favor of gray suiting and shirting materials.

Aside from refashioning *panuelos* into collars, he reshaped the traditional bell sleeves into more modern variations that included the coat, bishop and lantern sleeves. To add a dash or two of color, he added madras and broadcloth into the mix.

Even traditionalists like Patis Tesoro (Spanish) and Steve de Leon (Commonwealth) were able to tweak their respective collections consisting of stylized and updated Maria Claras.

The attempt was yet another testament to de Leon's artistry and craftsmanship, as the designer thought of fresh ways of using familiar fibers such as abaca, banana and piña and combining them with silk, taffeta and *jusi*.

De Leon's trademark origami figures found a fitting canvas in his intricate tops. He also did a number of traditional barongs made of banana fiber and silk thread.

Fresh faces

The show also became a venue for fresh faces. Aside from Roferos and Navarro, young John Herrera (the '80s) was able to hold his own with a collection inspired by the period's excesses as well as successes by avant-garde Japanese designers.

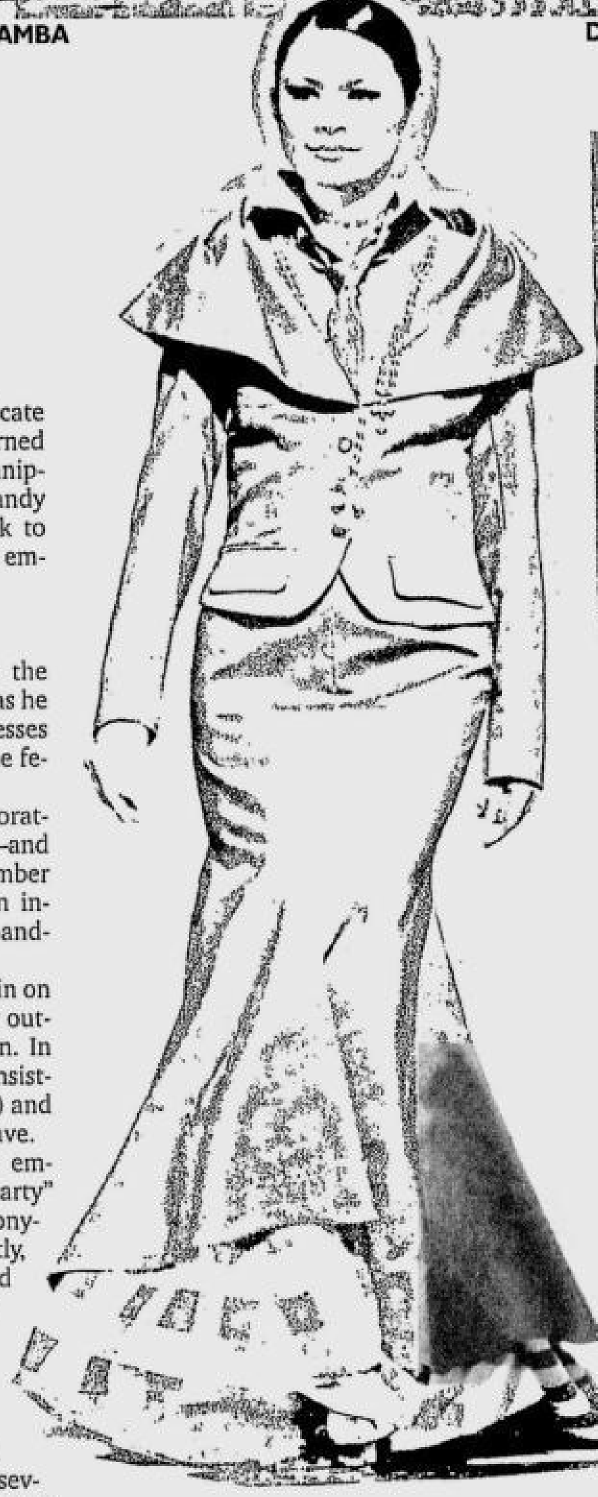
Herrera wisely eschewed vivid colors in favor of volume and structure as he mixed traditional fabrics such as *jusi*, linen, piña and piñaseda with trusty staples such as lycra, jersey, gauze and tulle.

To soften his dresses, he asked twin brother Paul to beef up his winning entry in the recent FDCP competition: strings upon strings of necklace adorned with black butterflies.

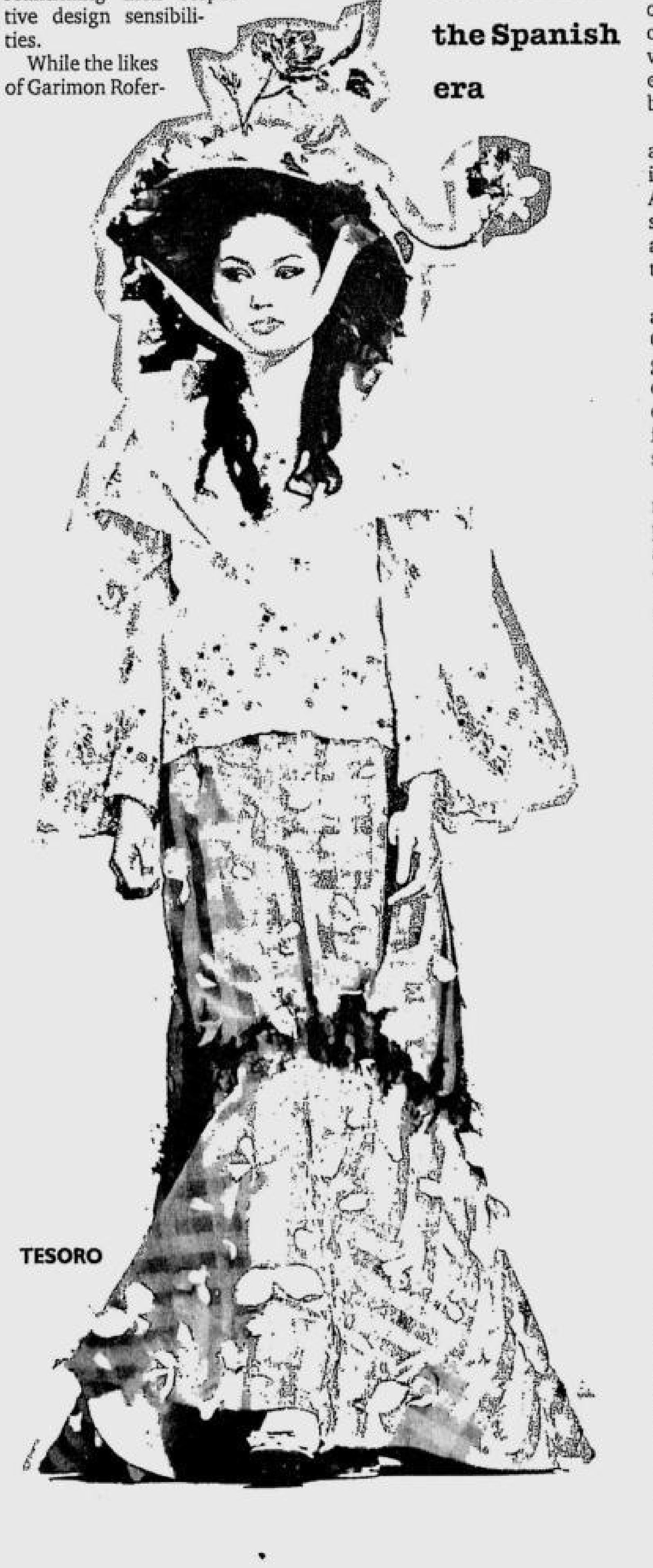
Veteran couturier Ben Farrales capped the show with a glittery ensemble consisting of heavily beaded and detachable red, white and blue ternos-cum-coats that revealed his trademark draped dresses.

It was a millennium collection with enough bling to make a blind man blanch. Indeed, in the hands of the "Dean," the future was so bright we ought to have worn shades.

E-mail the author at avergar@inquirer.com.ph


LLOREN

LAUREL


TESORO

BUENDIA

KATIGBAK

RAMOS

ROFEROS

FASHION EXCLUSIVE!

Chatting with Christian Louboutin

By Kristel Cue
Contributor

NEW YORK FASHION WEEK is one of the rare times during winter when no day can ever be too cold to go outdoors. Snow or shine, hundreds of people decked out in the finest couture doggedly make their way to Bryant Park—all for the sake of getting a preview of next season's top collections.

I, on the other hand, find myself steering clear of the tents, heading in the opposite direction for a personal sneak preview: the Fall 2007 collection of designer Christian Louboutin.

Better known as the man behind the red soles, Christian Louboutin is now one of the most famous—and most mispronounced—names in the fashion industry (it's pronounced *Lu-bu-tahn*). His gorgeous Parisian shoes have become a Hollywood favorite, appearing in red-carpet events and parties just as often as the celebrities themselves.

Remember the black-patent-peeptoe-slingbacks-with-skinny-jeans look that Mary-Kate Olsen was sporting? *Voila, Louboutins!*

Now that his red lacquered soles have reached closet staple status, it's hard to believe that his first boutique opened in Paris only in 1992. Prior to that, he worked freelance for Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent and also collaborated with Chloe, Lanvin and Diane von Furstenberg, among other top-notch designers.

Despite his amazing success, Louboutin is kind enough to spare 40 minutes of his hectic Fashion Week schedule to talk to *moi*. This French designer sits down in his showroom to share with Filipino fashionistas the quirky story behind his trademark, his childhood dreams, current collection and his one and only lifetime passion—obviously, shoes.

Why the red soles? When did you first develop this trademark and how did you come up with it?

You know, it was never supposed to be a trademark. In 1992, I started to draw a lot of things and part of that collection was inspired by Andy Warhol pop in general, so everything was very, very colorful. For most designers, there is also another thing that doesn't always happen, but when you do a sketch, reality sometimes betrays it and you want to be as close as possible to the original idea.

When I looked at the prototype of my first drawing, it was exactly the design, it was exactly the shape and it was very, very, very close to my drawing so I was very happy, but something was missing and I could not understand what.

> **'The shoe must be at the service of the woman, not the woman at the service of her shoe'**

THE GREEN apple of my eyes

The shoe was called "Pansy." It was a maryjane. I looked at it, and I did not understand what exactly happened. Then I had this assistant who was painting her nails all the time. At one point, I looked and I saw that there was this big part that was black in the prototype, and I had no black in my drawing!

Then I thought, maybe this big mass of black was what would make it different. So as she was painting her nails, I took her nail polish and polished the sole. Suddenly, just like a flash, the drawing came to life with that splash of color.

It was perfect! So I decided to have colors everywhere, including the sole. I started with the red. It was 1992, and women in Paris were all in black. But even if the woman was in black, you know, she would have red nails, maybe red lips, etc. Basically, even if you have no color, the red still exists. So after the first season I did it, and suddenly people were coming up to me saying it was so nice!

'I guess it's just an attractive thing also. I thought, since shoes are often linked to seduction, if red adds to that seduction, then maybe I should keep the red. That's basically what I've done, so now it comes out like a trademark, but it was never meant to be one. It just happened—an accident.

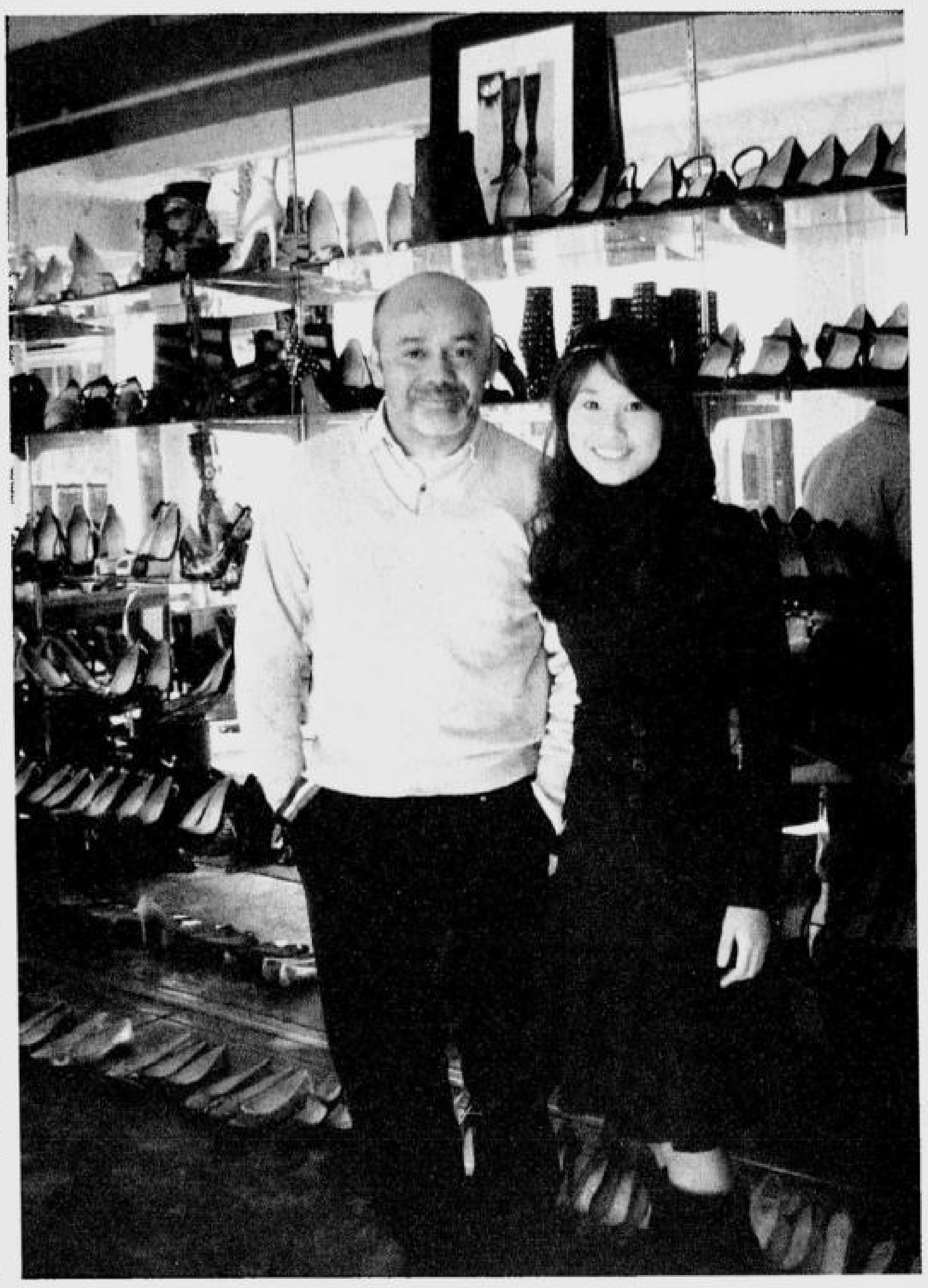
I don't see any ads at all for Christian Louboutin. You don't advertise in magazines like Vogue or Harper's Bazaar, yet all of a sudden you're really popular in America and even in Asia. Everybody's suddenly talking about Christian Louboutin even in the Philippines!

I actually used to sell in the Philippines a long time ago, in Manila, at a place called Rustan's. But devaluation was a problem, I think, at that time, so the shoes got really, really expensive and became an item which made no sense to buy. So we stopped. I actually went to the Philippines because of that.

What makes your shoes different from those of other designers like Brian Atwood, Jimmy Choo, etc.?

I will tell you one thing. Everybody's different, but everybody has a very specific background that makes a difference in what they do. I was brought up in a feminine family. I had a father who was barely there, but I had four sisters and a mother, so I was really over-surrounded by women. Because of this, my shoes can really be described as feminine. They have to be pretty. I guess that's why I'm selling more shoes, because they are flattering to women.

So if you have to describe your shoes as you would describe a person, they would be feminine then?


DESIGNER Christian Louboutin with the author in New York

Yes, absolutely, but at the same time my shoes would be a multi-faceted person also.

As much as I love high heels, I do like flat shoes, too. In my sketches, I always prefer to draw them as high heels, then I just cut the heel. My shoes can switch personalities, just as every woman is different and can change moods from day to day.

When did you first realize that you wanted to design shoes?

Pretty early. Eleven? Twelve? From what I remember, it was the only job I really wanted to do. At one point, I wanted to be—for five minutes and a half—an acupuncturist because I had read a wonderful book about acupuncture. But what I didn't like about it was, when I was visualizing the study that I had to do, I thought—my God, what a mess!

So yes, I've always wanted to do shoes. I got a proposal to do an extensive line of denim, but I just couldn't imagine doing that. I never wanted to go into the fashion industry. In the beginning, all I wanted to do was make shoes for showgirls. Even if I've ended up working in fashion, it's not for my love of fashion, but my love of shoes.

Do you have a favorite shoe?

You know what? It's always the next one. It's always the one that I haven't yet finished designing. It switches from one shoe to another. Every season, there's always one, then after that it's going to be surpassed by another that I haven't designed yet.

What's your inspiration when designing, and where do you get it?

It comes from everywhere. Everything you look at, you can see in so many ways. From objects and people to attitudes and conversations—everything has something that can be transformed into an element of decoration and element of a shoe.

Like, for instance, this shoe [gets a pair of black pumps with a bow at the back] was inspired by a picture of a fish hiding behind a sea anemone. A well-done shoe for me is something that is beautiful, but the first thing you must always look at is the woman. The shoe must be at the service of the woman, not the woman at the service of her shoe.

Tell me about your current collection. What's it all about?

This here is my Autumn-Winter '07-'08 collection. It has a lot of satin, suede and patent, but what I used a lot this season were actually bright metallics, which already started last season. Another inspiration was graffiti.

Can you see this trend staying? What do you think will next season be all about?

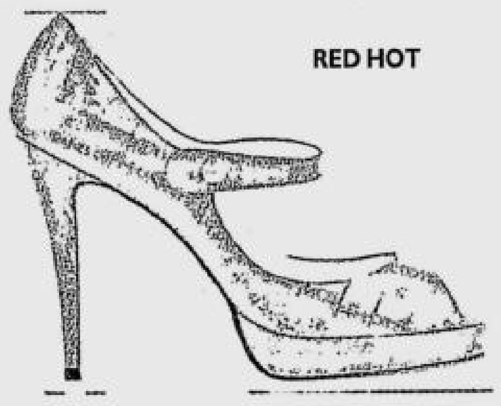
You know what? I'm not thinking ahead. I'm just drawing whatever comes to mind.

What kind of woman is the epitome of Christian Louboutin? What kind of woman should wear your shoes?

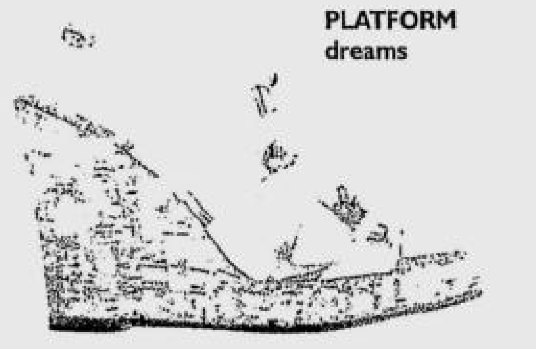
It can be a lot of women, but it has to be a woman who likes being a woman. That would be No. 1. She is also into femininity and is someone who is playful, I would think.

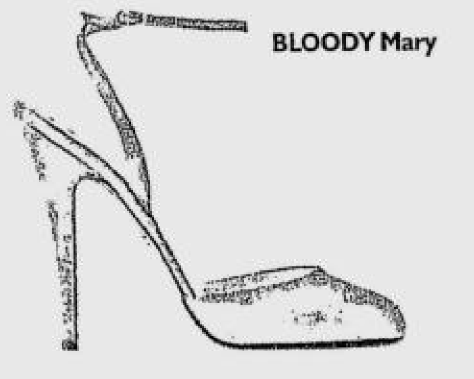
(Editor's note: Images of Christian Louboutin Fall 07 collection is not yet available.)

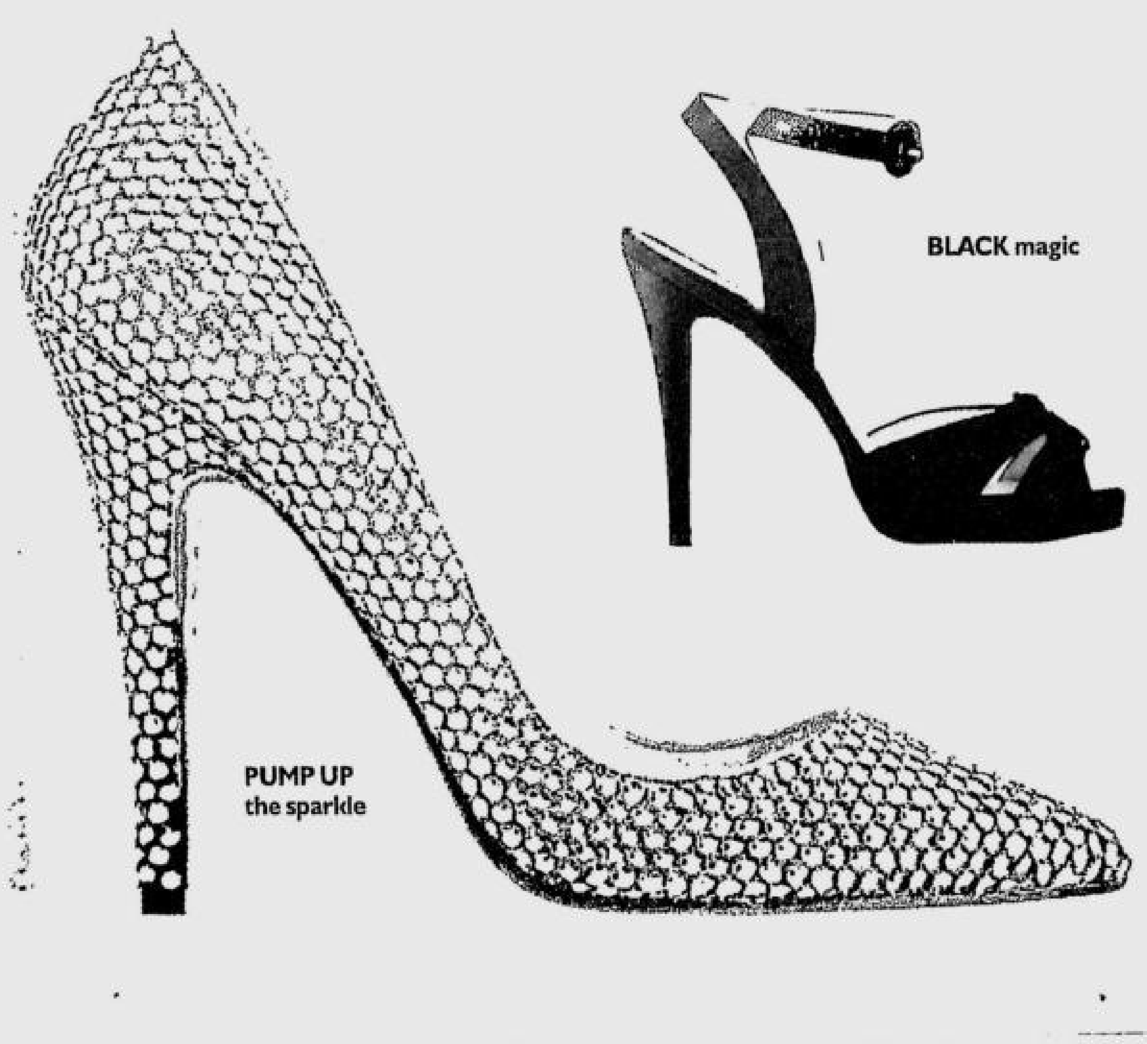
Chritan Loubotin's S/S collection


RED HOT

FUCHSIA


PLATFORM dreams


BLOODY Mary


PUMP UP the sparkle

BLACK magic

POWDER pink

METALLICA

SUNSET slippers

BEAUTY

SCARLET glamour

Model Bianca Araneta

The YSL look

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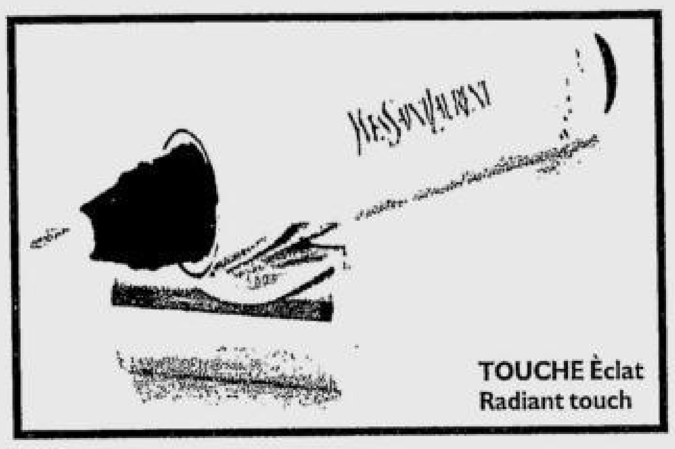


TOUCHE Èclat Radiant touch

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

EACH BRAND HAS A history and a personality of its own. Yves Saint Laurent is a brand that started in 1961. And the brand is all about sophistication, luxury and status.

I love how brands evolve. And a brand that has so much history is more than just a brand for me.

A brand with a history makes me appreciate more its value and legacy.

Great brands are also conversational pieces. They make for light but intelligent conversations.

Before Yves Saint Laurent ventured into beauty, he was (and still is) an undeniable leader in fashion. His couture house has always aimed to create confident, glamorous and perfectly stylish looks that big stars wear in the most celebrated events such as the Oscars and Golden Globes.

I learned that YSL also contributed many fashion firsts such as the tuxedo, safari jacket, pea-jacket, and trousers for women.

Now that I am aware of those, I will never see a pantsuit or a top with matching pants without thinking of how it wouldn't be possible without Mr. Yves Saint Laurent's vision.

Personally I'm just happy knowing that I may never be able to afford an Yves Saint Lauren suit. But it doesn't mean I can never own something from this great fashion house.

Luckily for all of us we can purchase a beauty product that is still true to Yves Saint Laurent's vision and history but in a more consumer-friendly price.

From fragrances, makeup and skincare, YSL is still widely associated with glamour, style and luxury.

Skin

When it comes to the face, your skin is your canvas. No matter how beautiful your features may be, uneven skin tone and zits will be a great detractor no one can afford to have.

Luckily, in 1992, Yves Saint Laurent unveiled a comprehensive and easy-to-use skincare regimen line.

Touche Èclat is the YSL highlighter pen that adds radiance to dull, lifeless skin. When used, the skin looks well-maintained and nourished. Because of this light concealer, the user looks much younger.

And also because it is light, it is great to use from day to night since you can just as easily put it on without the feeling of heaviness.

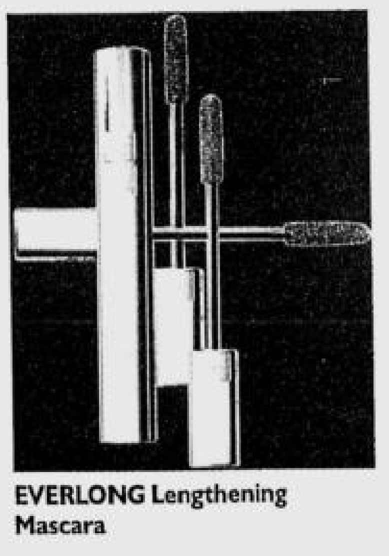
The Touche perfect touch foundation brush gives a transparent airy finish with full coverage. It is great to use for setting makeup or simply allowing your skin to look flawless without too much effort. It's like a miracle wand, if you ask me!

My fave is Touche blush-puff that gives the user that instant glow we all strive to have. No need to go to the gym everyday (now, I don't really know if that is a good or a bad thing).

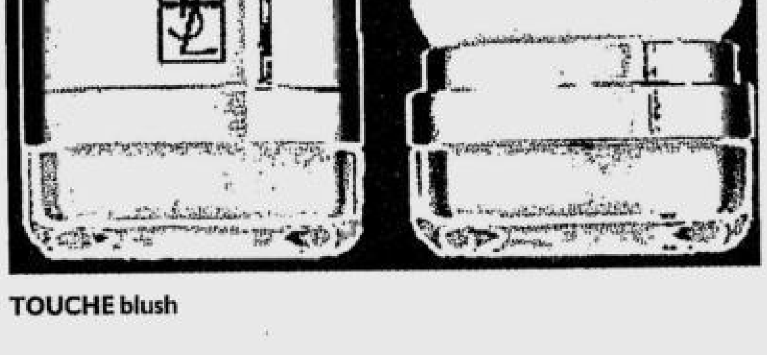
Another star Touche product is the volumizing mascara. Put it on and you don't have to wear fake lashes anymore!

SMOKIN'!

YSL collection



EVERLONG Lengthening Mascara



TOUCHE blush

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Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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- **Li'l man Jaden is his famous dad's joy** /E6
- **No USTv award for show biz talk shows** /E5
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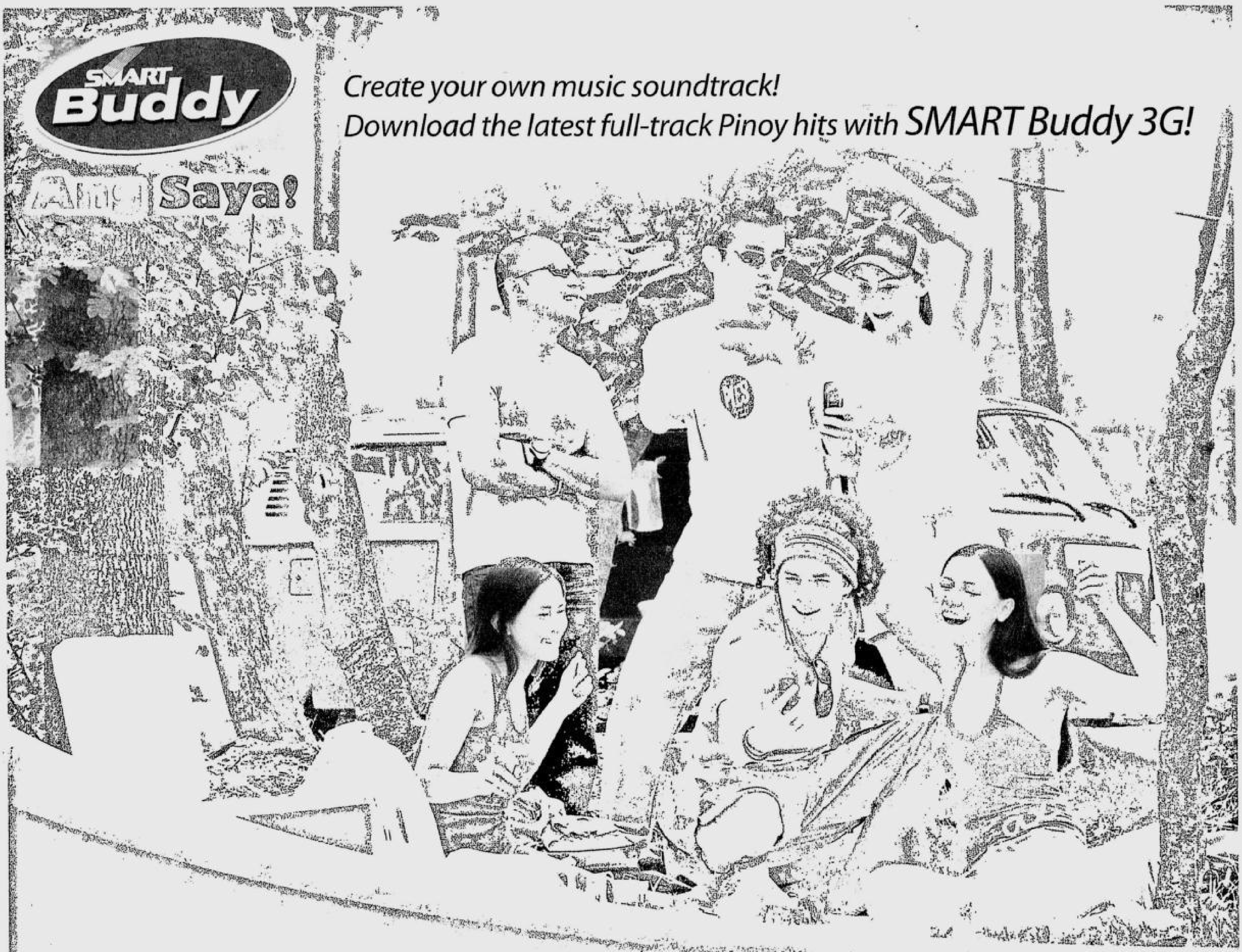

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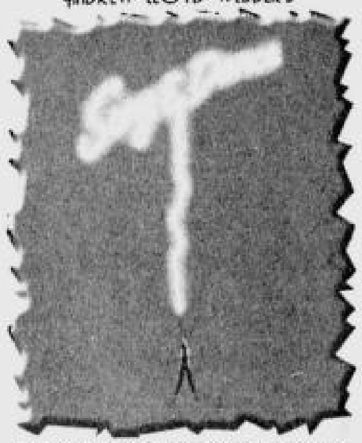

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'Friends'

"Friends: The Complete Series Collection" has all 236 episodes from the award-winning series in a collector's box.

Warner Home Video gives buyers of the collection a chance to win "Friends All New Video Game" and "Friends: The One With All The Trivia."

The Emmy Award-winning series stars Matthew Perry (Chandler), Matt LeBlanc (Joey), Courtney Cox (Monica), Lisa Kudrow (Phoebe), Jennifer Aniston (Rachel) and David Schwimmer (Ross).

'Open Season'

What happens in the wild when the hunters become the hunted?

Magnavision Home Video, in cooperation with Enchanted Kingdom and Tales from the Enchanted Kingdom, presents the video release of one of 2006's most outrageous animated films—"Open Season," featuring the voices of Gary Sinise, Martin Lawrence and Ashton Kutcher.

The Sony Pictures animation feature is about a 900-pound domesticated grizzly bear named Boog and a scrawny one-horned mule deer named Elliot, who ended up stranded together in the woods during hunting season.

'Water Giant'

In "Mee-Shee: The Water Giant," Sean Cambell, an oil company troubleshooter, is called in to help retrieve a unique drill head after a helicopter crash in a remote Canadian lake.

For his 10-year-old son Mac, this means postponing a vacation yet again. But he soon learns of a legendary creature that lives in the lake.

Together with a native American girl, Mac searches for the monster, but he accidentally slips and nearly drowns. He is rescued by something huge, which buoys him up to the surface.

Available on DVD for P375, on VCD for P275.

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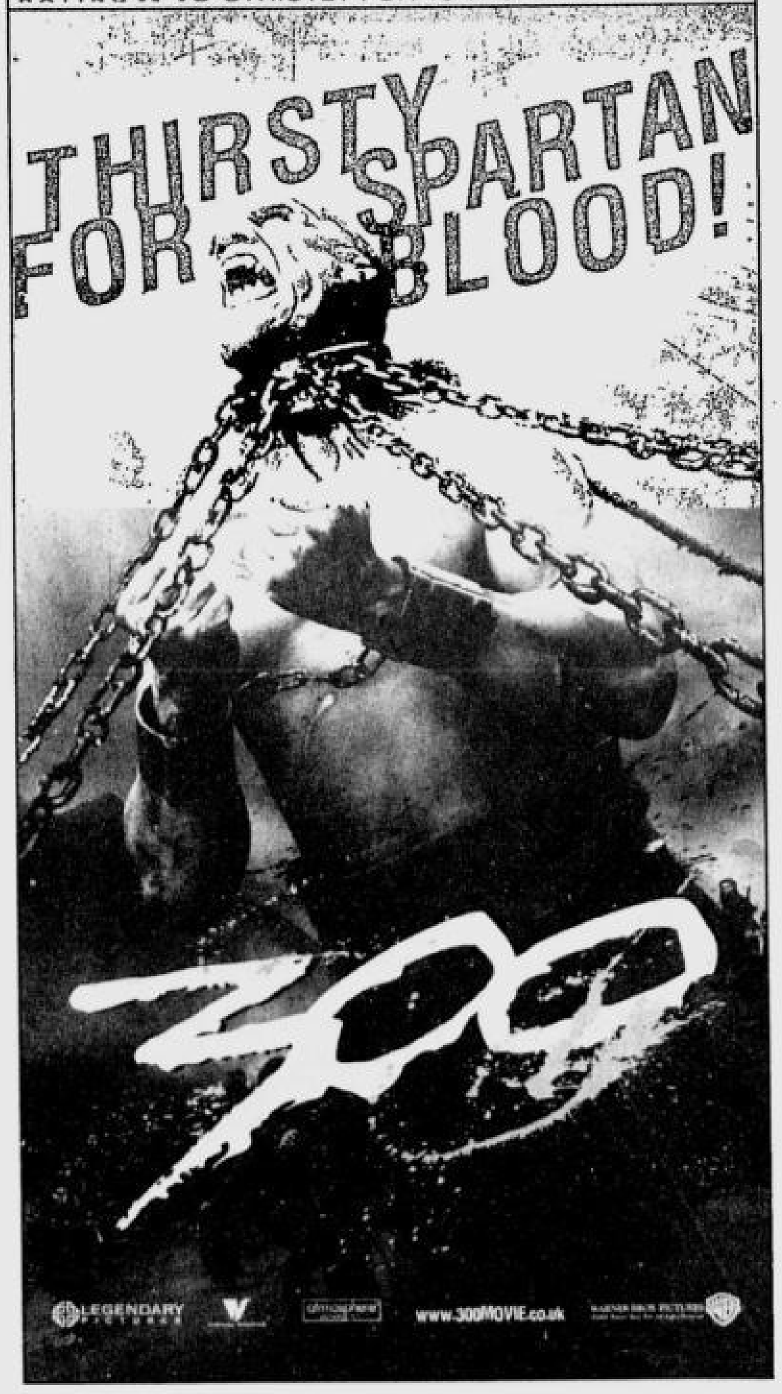
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I hope James takes care of Kris & their baby–Joey Marquez

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

GOT A SURPRISE CALL FROM my fave *kumpare* Joey Marquez. Funny— even if he's one of the hosts of "S-Files," he's not updated on show biz happenings.

"I get to know the news when I'm in the studio *na*," he said. I teased him: "That's because off-cam your world revolves around girls. You have no time for *chismis*!"

He laughed. "*Basta ako*, admit *na lang ako ng* admit *kahit hindi totoo minsan ang chismis para wala ng maraming tanong*!"

He suddenly turned serious. "Is it true that Kris and James' marriage is on the rocks?" I shot back, "*Uyyy*! Concerned *siya*!" He replied, "Seriously, I hope it's not true. I really hope James takes care of Kris and their baby."

Beneath Joey's playful image is a pure heart. I've seen girls come and go in his life. Even when the water runs dry in his relationships, he makes sure he doesn't burn the bridges leading to his kids. He once said, "My children are the only ones who will truly love me till the end."

His shortcomings as a lover are more than compensated for by his being a dedicated father. Hopefully, aside from Kris and basketball, that's something Joey and James will have in common after Kris gives birth.

Fatal attraction?

Hope (rumored girl and former facialist of James Yap) better come out and say what she has to say. All sorts of crazy stories are circulating about this mystery girl. Some quarters insist she's fatally attracted to James. Others claim she was just a pawn used to besmirch the good name of the beauty clinic she used to work for.

Kris and James have said their piece and made peace. It's Hope's turn. Who's the one hopelessly in love?

Teamwork

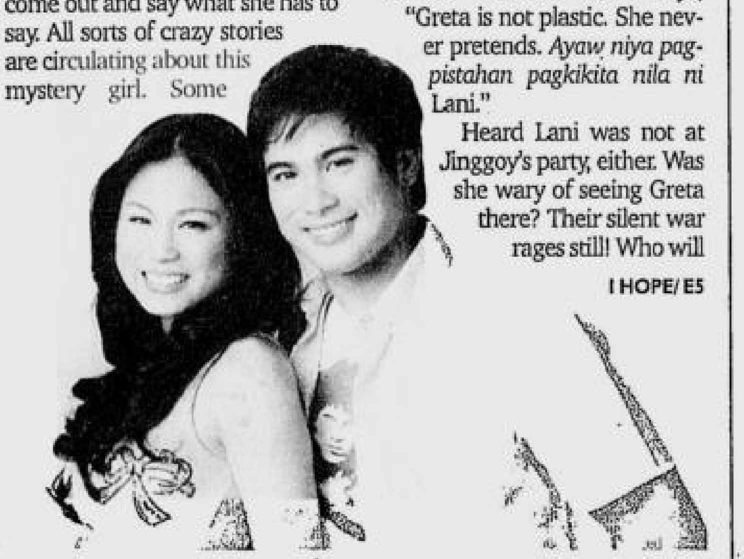
Rufa Mae Quinto saw her ex-BF, cager Rudy Hatfield, when she was a guest at the PBA games recently. But they didn't get a chance to talk. "*Kahit noong kami pa*, his focus is on the ball when he has a game," she said. "*Deadma* to the world *yun pag nasa* court. *Katuwa lang* that while I was singing, the crowd was cheering Hatfield! Even split *na kami*, I remain a fan of his team." But her teamwork with BF Erik Santos is what keeps her heart bouncing these days.

No-show

Gretchen Barretto was a no-show at the birthday bash of Sen. Jinggoy Estrada because she didn't want a contrived "beso-beso" encounter with Lani Mercado. As our common friend says, "Greta is not plastic. She never pretends. *Ayaw niya pagpistahan pagkikita nila ni* Lani."

Heard Lani was not at Jinggoy's party, either. Was she wary of seeing Greta there? Their silent war rages still! Who will

I HOPE/ E5



TONI Gonzaga and Sam Milby

"DREAM Academy's" Lauren Dyogi and "Idol's" Ryan Agoncillo

PHOTOS BY RYAN LIM

"PHILIPPINE Idol's" Pow Chavez

ARNOLD CLAVIO

Studio 23 tops USTv Awards

DAPHNE Oseña and Amanda Griffin, "F"

ABS-CBN PROGRAMS RECEIVED THE lion's share of awards but it was the network's subsidiary, Studio 23, that was named Most Youth-Responsible Station of the Year in the Third USTv Students Choice Awards.

The awards are given by the 35,000-strong student body of the University of Santo Tomas. This year's awarding rites were held last Tuesday at the UST Medicine Auditorium.

Studio 23 won for Best Educational Program ("Sineskuwela"), Public Affairs Program ("Y-Speak"), and Magazine Program ("F").

ABS-CBN won for Best News Program ("TV Patrol-World"), Public Affairs Program ("The Correspondents"), Sitcom (the defunct "OK Fine, Ito ang Gusto N'yo"), Reality TV ("Pinoy Dream Academy), Drama Anthology ("Maalaala Mo Kaya"), Drama Mini-Series ("Maging Sino Ka Man"), Actors in a Mini-Series (John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo, "Maging Sino Ka Man"), Full-Length Animated Program ("Naruto"), and Variety Show ("ASAP '06").

GMA 7 won for News and Public Affairs Host (Arnold Clavio), and Foreign Soap Opera ("Jewel in the Palace").

ABC 5 had two winners—"Family Rosary Crusade," Best Catholic Program; and "Philippine Idol," which shared the Reality TV Program Award with "Pinoy Dream Academy."

Speculum Veritatis

Broadcast personality Ali Sotto received the Speculum Veritatis Award "for mirroring in her life and professional practice the Thomasian virtue of truth in charity"

Sotto said she was able to cope with the loss of her son—Miko Sotto, who died in 2003—because of her Thomasian training.

She dedicated the award to her teachers, including her mother who had taught at the UST College of Education. "What I am now I owe it to them," she said.

ABNER MERCADO, "The Correspondents"

Fr. Ernesto A rceo, O.P., new rector magnificus, led UST officials and student leaders in handing out the awards.

The penultimate award for Best Television Station used to be given to the station that won the most awards. It was recast this year to Most Youth-Responsible Television Station—for the network that that "reflects in its programming a pro-family orientation and a bias to make TV a tool for the moral and integral formation of young Filipinos."

John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo won Best Actor and Actress in a Drama Mini-Series for ABS-CBN's "Maging Sino Ka Man," which also won Best Drama Mini-Series.

ABS-CBN's "Maalaala Mo Kaya" won Best Drama Anthology for the third straight year. Accepting the award, Charo Santos, producer and host, disclosed that she had cross-enrolled for Chemistry at UST and learned first-hand the values cultivated by the institution where her own parents and siblings had been educated.

Another third-time winner was the defunct show "F," which won Best Magazine Show.

Daphne Oseña and Amanda Griffin, two of the three former program hosts (the third was Angel Aquino), accepted the award.

"We're very touched that [you] remember the show and recognize its quality and the effort we put into it," said Oseña. "Thank you, UST."

Clavio received his second USTv award as Best News and Public Affairs host (he also won in 2005). "I will never fail you," Clavio, a UST Journalism alumnus, told the audience. "You will always be my inspiration."

Refined criteria

Fr. Isidro Abano, OP, UST secretary-general, said that on their third year, the USTv awards had "refined" the criteria to better emphasize "significant content" and "Christian dimensions."

Perhaps because of the strict criteria, no winner was named for Best Entertainment News Program.

"The USTv Students Choice Award has no place for gossip shows," the criterion for the category read. "An entertainment news program that focuses excessively on show biz celebrities and their misdeeds and mispronouncements, or one that panders to the cheap tricks and crass publicity stunts of the entertainment world, is pornographic."

Ray Liotta: I'm still a 'goodfella'

By Janet Susan R. Nepales
Los Angeles Correspondent

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

LOS ANGELES—RAY LIOTTA, an actor known for his tough guy/villain roles, landed in the headlines following his arrest last Feb. 18 on suspicion of driving under the influence. He reportedly crashed into two parked vehicles while driving his SUV in Pacific Palisades, California.

The Emmy Award-winning actor (for a guest role on "ER") was unaccompanied, and nobody was injured in the collision, according to the reports.

Rugged looks

Liotta, who is appearing as Jack, leader of a biker gang, in the upcoming comedy "Wild Hogs," was released after posting a $15,000 bail. He was ordered to appear in court next month.

We talked to the actor a few days before his accident at a Beverly Hills hotel and got a glimpse of the gangster Henry Hill in Martin Scorsese's "Goodfellas," the violent ex-convict Ray Sinclair in Jonathan Demme's "Something Wild" and the imposing Henry Oak in Joe Carnahan's "Narc."

In a brown leather jacket and jeans, Liotta, now 52, has rugged good looks and a gruff voice to match. Asked what he thought of his bad-guy image, he simply said, "Bad guys stand out in people's minds and some of them are really great roles. I have learned to accept it—I have also done a number of good-guy roles but still, people remember me for the villain roles."

Liotta revealed, "I have never been in a fight in my life. Just one little scratch in seventh grade, that's it. I'm the type who was chased by other guys in high school—never the antagonist."

The actor's no-nonsense attitude stopped some journalists who disguised personal questions as serious ones. Liotta easily saw through the ruse and chided one reporter who made an attempt.

The actor perked up when talk turned to Karsen Liotta, his 8-year-old daughter with former wife, actress Michelle Grace. Karsen is now an actress.

Switching to a calmer tone, Liotta talked of his little girl: "Having a daughter changed my life. I try to come home early so I can still see her awake, but most of the time, she is already sleeping. I am lucky that, these days, she gets to visit me on the set."

One set Karsen got to visit was that of "Wild Hogs." Liotta pointed out that being with John Travolta, Tim Allen, William H. Macy and Martin Lawrence allowed him "to portray a bad boy with a sense of humor," which he found "really fun!"

Of the guys, he said: "They were very funny, especially between takes. John and Tim were always trying to amuse us during breaks."

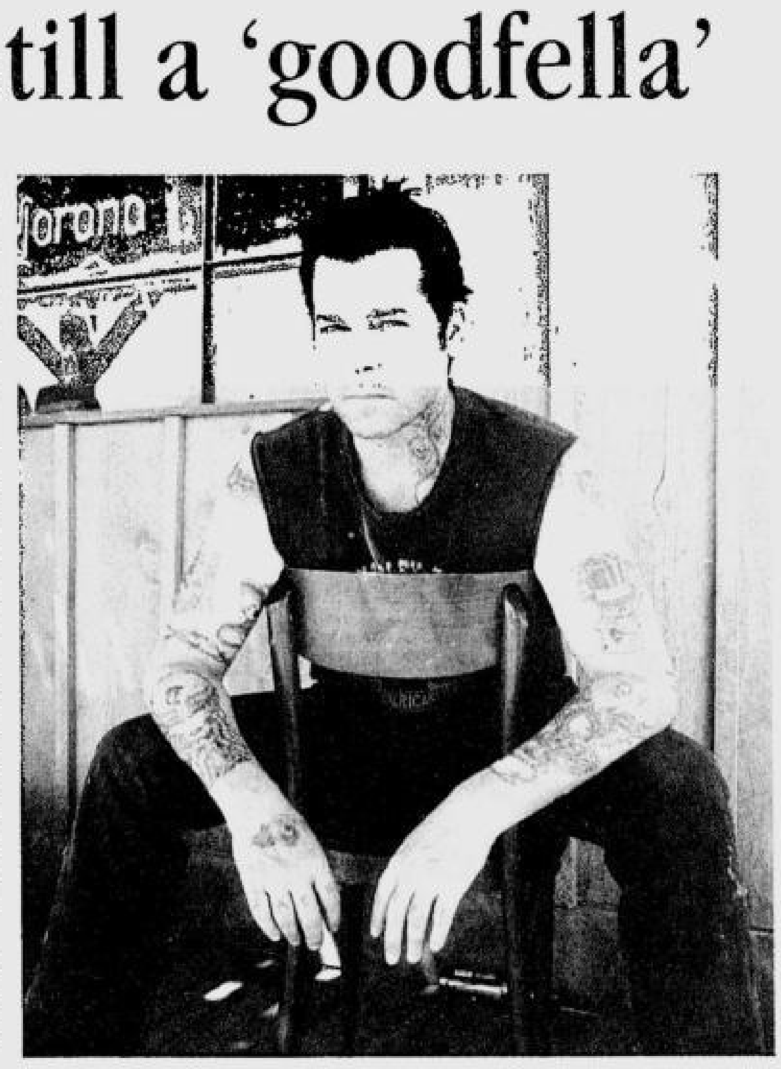
"Wild Hogs" is the story of four men going through midlife crisis who decide to go on a cross-country road trip on their bikes. They encounter a real biker gang with a mean leader, played by Liotta.

First Harley

Liotta disclosed that he had never ridden a Harley Davidson before. "It was nice that a professional trained us," he said. "First, I rode the small bikes; then I graduated to the bigger bikes."

After receiving a Harley Davidson when the filming ended, Liotta took formal lessons and got a license. He now hops on the Harley regularly. "I learned something really practical in this movie. I really love biking now," he confessed.

Going back to the subject of his daughter, the Golden Globe Best Supporting Actor nominee (for "Something Wild") revealed that he didn't use to like it when people came up to him for his autograph, especially when he was with his child. "I wanted to keep my full attention on her," he explained. "But she told me once, when I turned away from autograph-seekers, that she wanted me to do autographs. She said, 'Daddy, I like it when people come up to you.' So I did."



TOUGH guy tattooed for "Wild Hogs"

He observed that Karsen aspires to follow in his footsteps and go into show business. "Every time we watch 'American Idol,' when the commercials come up, she will suddenly become a girl or boy contestant and make up a song on the spot. She can be wacky or serious. Then she wants me to critique her and she always wants me to be like Simon Cowell—be really mean to her. After my critique, she pretends to walk out the door, get really angry and say things like 'They didn't take me! He is such a jerk!'"

Funny girl

Right now, he said, his daughter is taking dance and acting classes. "She does a little bit of everything. She is very funny. She was in a TV series once and she was just an extra ... just in the background. When they cancelled the show, she was devastated. She said, 'Why did they cancel my show?'"

He confessed that he loves being a father and that he takes this responsibility seriously. "Raising kids is a big responsibility," he declared. "There is no downtime when you are raising kids because you are preparing them for life. It is great being a dad!"

ROUNDUP

'Batad' screenings

"BATAD"

"Batad sa Paang Palay," a film about a boy who wants more from life than what his village can offer, will be shown from March 14 to 20 at SM Digital Theaters.

Screenings are at 2 p.m., 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and at 12 noon, 3 p.m., 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The digital cinemas are in SM Megamall, SM North Edsa, SM Manila, SM Centerpoint, SM Southmall, SM San Lazaro, SM Fairview, SM Mall of Asia, SM San Fernando, SM Clark, SM Cebu and SM Davao.

The film has been rated "A" by the Cinema Evaluation Board.

'Imahe Nasyon'

"Imahe Nasyon," a conceptual omnibus film by 20 alternative filmmakers, is ongoing at the Robinsons Galleria IndieSine until Feb. 27.

The project was conceptualized by line producers Jon and Carol Red in commemoration of Edsa 1, a political revolution that changed their generation forever.

The films, made of different cinematic genres representative of the filmmaker's style, are directed by Poklong Anading, Emman Dela Cruz, Yeye Calderon, Neil Daza, Lav Diaz, Tad Ermitaño, Mes de Guzman, Rox Lee, Topel Lee, Milo Paz, Robert Quebral, Ellen Ramos, Raymond Red, R.A. Rivera, Lyle Sacris, EJ Salcedo, Sig Sanchez, Dennis Empalmado, Ogi Sugatan and Paolo Villaluna.

Love story

Real-life sweethearts Jericho Rosales and Heart Evangelista portray the true-to-life love story of Taguig first couple, Mayor Freddie and Kaye Tinga in tonight's episode of "Maalaala Mo Kaya."

Heart plays the Taguig first lady, a pure Chinese girl who grew up in Chinatown.

Jericho plays Kaye's Filipino officemate, who eventually became one of her closest friends.

An unexpected turn of events caused their friendship to blossom into real love.

The episode airs at 10 p.m. on ABS-CBN.

'Super Twins'

Tonight, viewers can catch the transformation of the super sisters in GMA's drama-adventure "Super Twins."

The twin sisters Sha Sha (Nicole Dulalia) and Tin Tin (Ella Cruz), who were helped and guided by Eliseo (Dennis Trillo) in utilizing their powers, will recite their chant, kiss their rings and transform for the first time as the newest Pinoy superheroines—Super S (Nadine Samonte) and Super T (Jennylyn Mercardo).

The series airs weeknights after "Asian Treasures."

"SUPER TWINS"

SHANG CINEPLEX

① BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
MTRCB GP
12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

② GHOST RIDER
MTRCB PG-13
1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

③ EPIC MOVIE
MTRCB R-13
12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

④ THE NUMBER 23
MTRCB R-13
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE
MUSIC AND LYRICS
MTRCB PG-13
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

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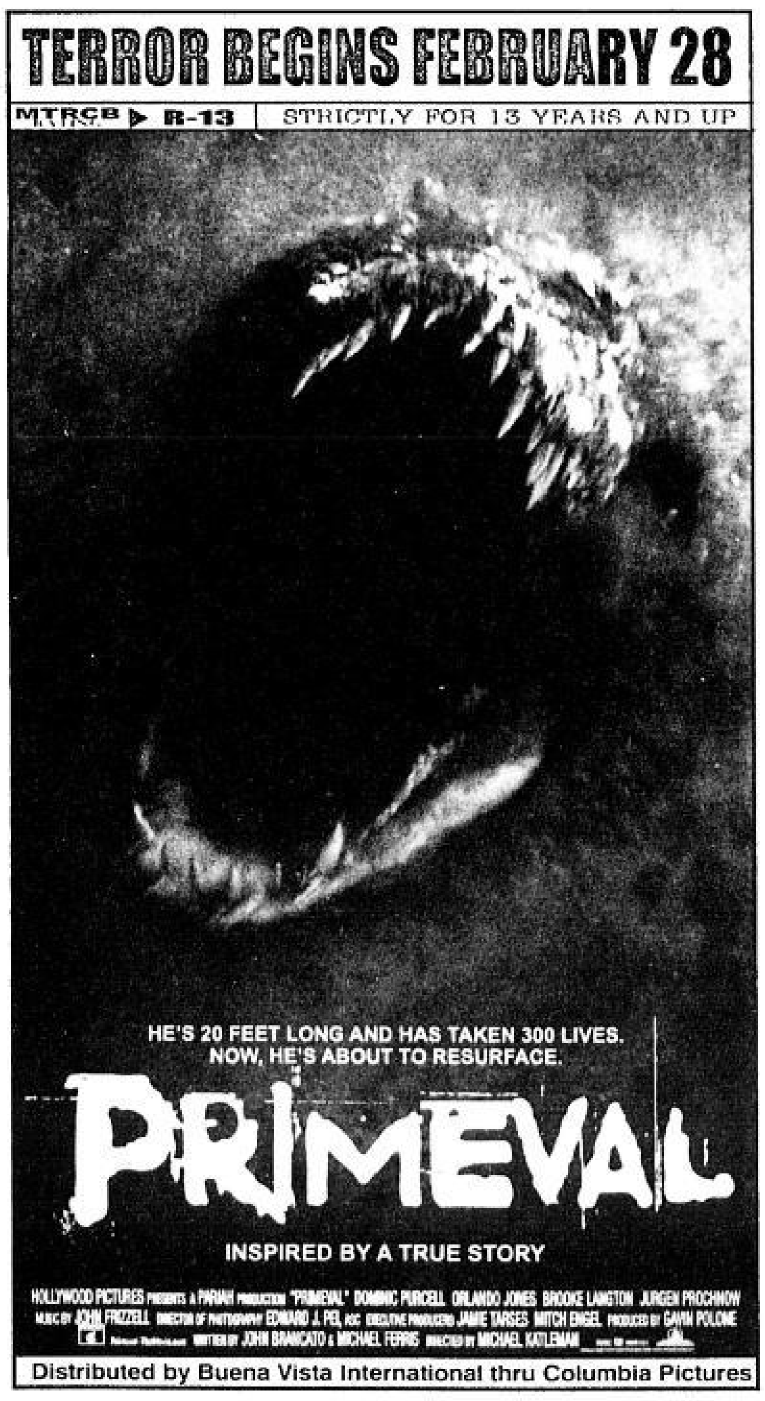

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MUSIC AND LYRICS PG13 12:50,3:15,5:40, 8:05,10:30	THE HOLIDAY PG13 1:20,4:10,7:00,9:50	THE NUMBER 23 R13 1:45,3:55,6:05, 8:15,10:25

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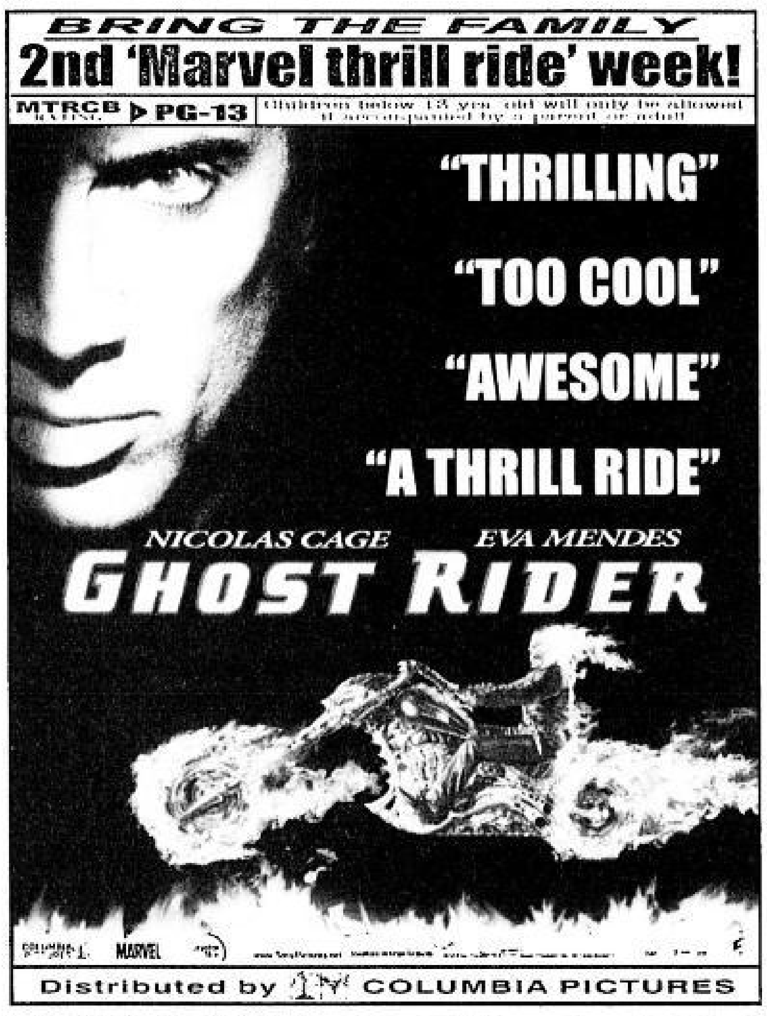

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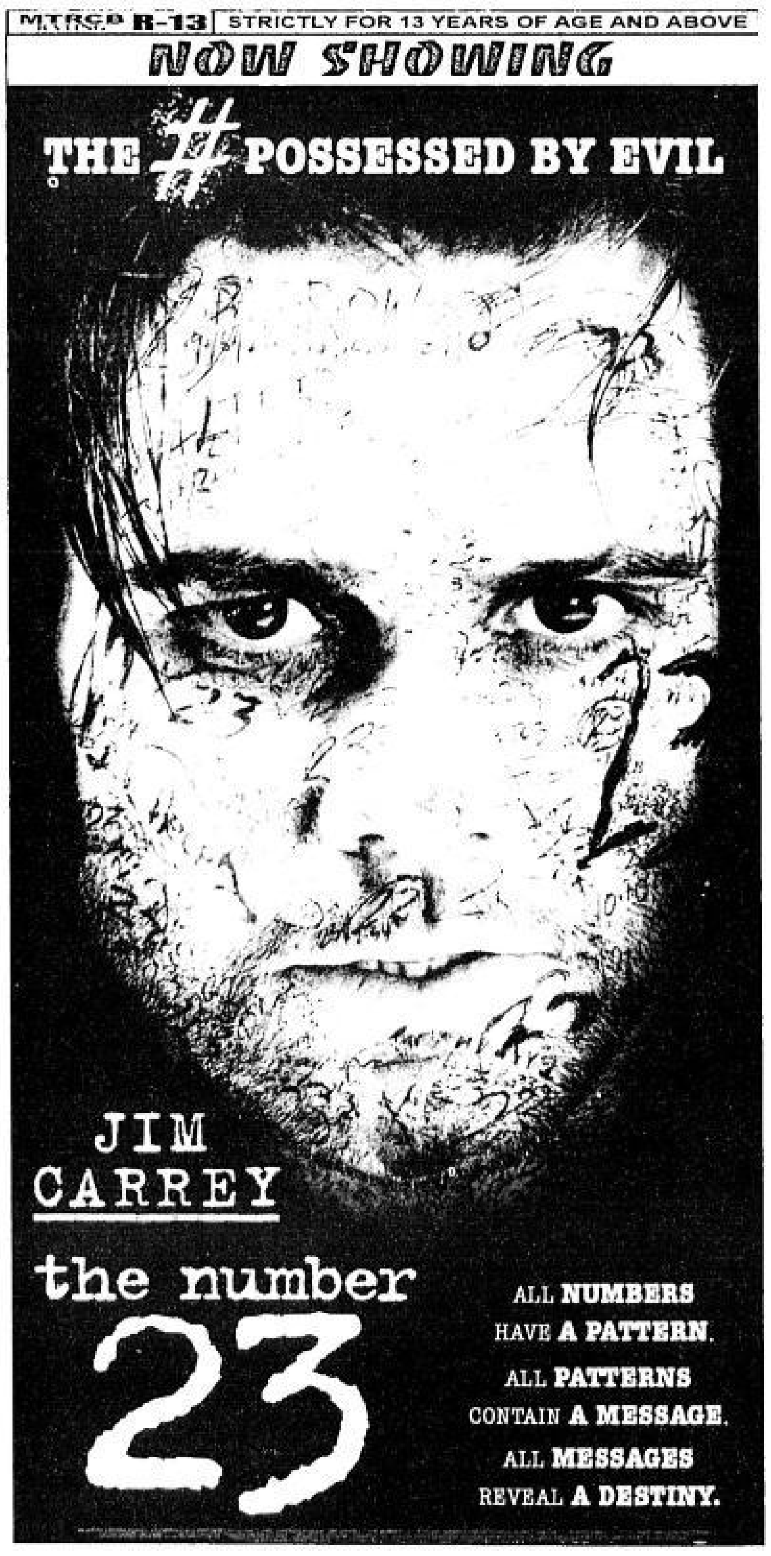

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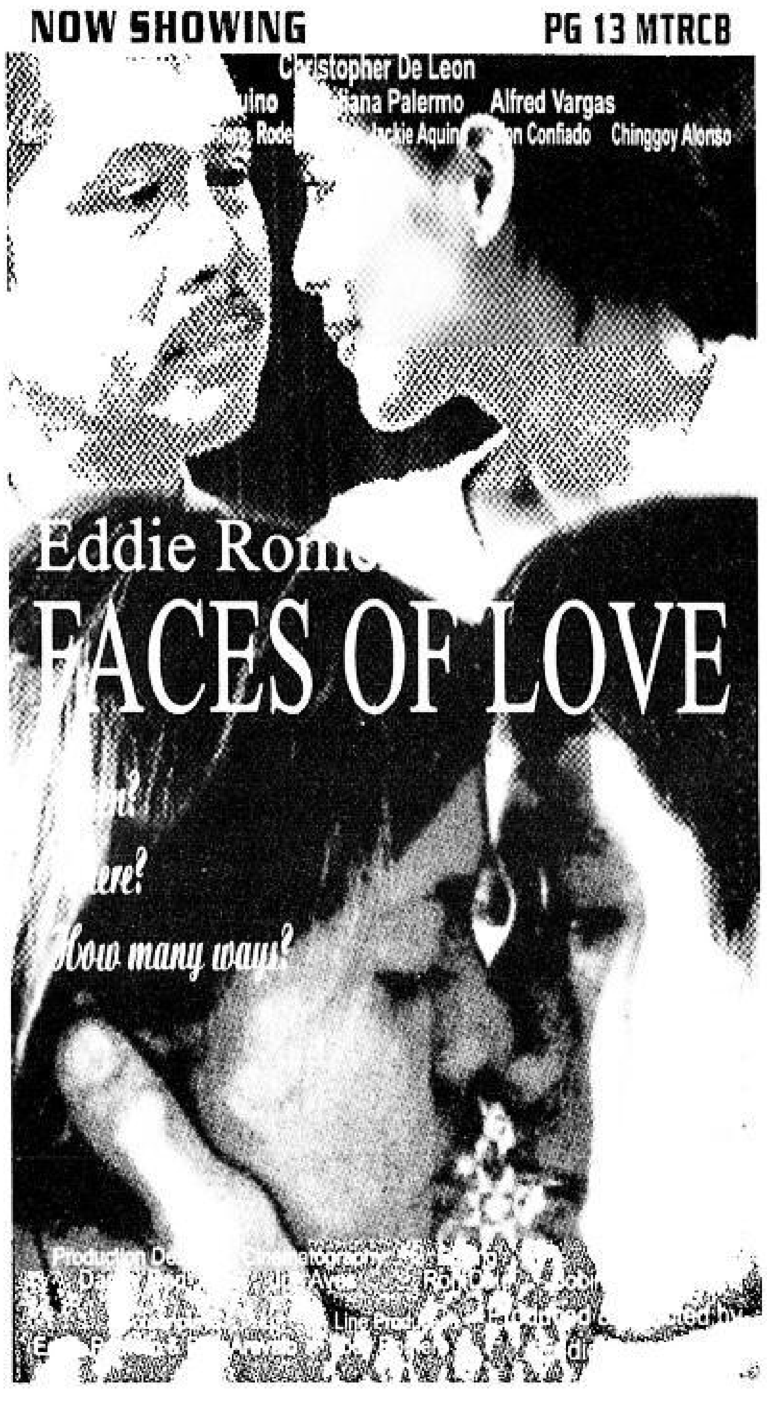
1 EPIC MOVIE
1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35,11:00
R 13

2 GHOST RIDER
12:20, 2:55, 5:40, 8:25, 11:05
PG 13

3 THE NUMBER 23
1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00
R 13

4 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00
G



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Will Smith's

From page E6

a little bit more creative with my time management now. I write a lot at night. I'm very much a night owl and that's the quietest time in my house."

***

In November 2005, we flew to Oakland, California to visit Will, Jaden and Thandie Newton (who plays the wife and mother but her character is fictionalized) on the set. We met Chris Gardner for the first time. Asked how painful it was to relive his homeless days with his son, Chris answered, "I'll tell you what was uncomfortable. It is one thing to think about the darkest days of your life in your own head but to give people a tour, you have to take the writer out. The commitment that I made from the beginning was, I did not want the writer to have to make up anything."

Now the CEO of his own stock brokerage firm, Chris shared, "There was one scene where it was clear that this character could crash and Will brought such intensity to the takes. You did not know if the character is going to quit, crack or cry. To see that scene again in my life, I had to walk away."

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.

I hope James takes …

From page E3

fire the next bullet and go BONG tarat tarat?!

'You Got Me!'

Toni Gonzaga shines once more in the romantic movie "You Got Me!" (opens Feb. 28). It's directed by Cathy Garcia-Molina (who was also at the helm of Toni and Sam's P100-million hit "You Are The One"). Toni plays Lt. Amor Santander, a headstrong policewoman whose weakness is love.

And what does she love about her two leading men Sam Milby and Zanjoe Marudo? "Sam is a good actor. I am so at home with him. Zanjoe is eager to learn and fun to be with."

Most memorable scene in the film? "When Zanjoe took me on top of a billboard for a date." So who's got her? "No takers yet (laughs)!" Finders, keepers, huh?

But didn't Sam find Toni many heartbeats ago? How can he keep looking for something he's already found? Or did they lose each other somewhere along the way to fame?

New talk show

"The Ricky Lo Exclusives" is the newest and boldest prime time show biz magazine talk show on QTV Channel 11, airing Wednesdays, 8:30 p.m. My good friend and esteemed colleague Ricky unveils show biz truths in a way that only he can. "Exclusives" magnifies the drama and joy of celebrity struggles and captures every moment of eventful revelations. LO and behold! It's Ricky!

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Matinee Fee- P200 Primetime Fee- P260
T-REX IN 3D
11:45AM 1:00PM 2:15PM
Admission Fee- P200
1 MUSIC AND LYRICS
2 THE MESSENGER
3 EPIC MOVIE
4 NUMBER 23
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
6 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
PREMIERE CINEMA
THE PROMISE
CENTERSTAGE
GHOST RIDER
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
NUMBER 23
CINEMA 2
EPIC MOVIE
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 FACES OF LOVE
2 MUSIC AND LYRICS
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 GHOST RIDER
5 NUMBER 23
6 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
7 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
8 THE PROMISE
9 THE MESSENGER
10 THE HOLIDAY
11 EPIC MOVIE
12 GHOST RIDER

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 NUMBER 23
2 THE MESSENGER
3 EPIC MOVIE
4 GHOST RIDER
5 MUSIC AND LYRICS
6 GHOST RIDER
7 THE FOUNTAIN
8 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
9 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
10 THE PROMISE
11 FACES OF LOVE
12 THE HOLIDAY

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 FACES OF LOVE
2 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
3 THE PROMISE
4 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
5 MUSIC AND LYRICS
6 NUMBER 23
7 GHOST RIDER
8 THE PROMISE
9 THE FOUNTAIN
10 THE MESSENGER
11 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
12 EPIC MOVIE

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 GHOST RIDER
2 EPIC MOVIE
3 NUMBER 23
4 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
5 THE PROMISE
6 MUSIC AND LYRICS
7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
8 FACES OF LOVE
9 THE FOUNTAIN
10 THE MESSENGER

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 GHOST RIDER
2 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
3 NUMBER 23
4 EPIC MOVIE
5 MUSIC AND LYRICS
6 THE PROMISE

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 NUMBER 23
2 FACES OF LOVE
3 EPIC MOVIE
4 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
5 THE PROMISE
6 MUSIC AND LYRICS
7 THE MESSENGER
8 GHOST RIDER
9 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
2 EPIC MOVIE
3 THE PROMISE
4 GHOST RIDER

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
2 NUMBER 23
3 MUSIC AND LYRICS
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
5 EPIC MOVIE
6 GHOST RIDER
7 FACES OF LOVE
8 THE MESSENGER
9 THE PROMISE
10 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
11 THE HOLIDAY
12 THE CLEANER

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323301-04
1 BABEL
2 THE PROMISE
3 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
4 GHOST RIDER

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 GHOST RIDER
2 THE CLEANER
3 FACES OF LOVE
4 THE PROMISE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
2 GHOST RIDER
3 THE PROMISE
4 EPIC MOVIE

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SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 FACES OF LOVE
2 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
3 GHOST RIDER
4 EPIC MOVIE
5 NUMBER 23
6 THE PROMISE
7 MUSIC AND LYRICS
8 THE MESSENGER

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 MUSIC AND LYRICS
2 GHOST RIDER
3 BABEL
4 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
5 FACES OF LOVE
6 THE PROMISE

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 GHOST RIDER
2 THE PROMISE
3 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 THE MESSENGER
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 THE PROMISE
4 TENACIOUS D

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 GHOST RIDER
2 BABEL
3 THE MESSENGER
4 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
5 FACES OF LOVE
6 THE PROMISE

SM CIY LIPA (043) 756-7925
1 THE HOLIDAY
2 THE PROMISE
3 THE MESSENGER
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 THE PROMISE
2 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
3 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
4 THE MESSENGER

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 GHOST RIDER
2 THE PROMISE
3 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 THE PROMISE
2 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
3 EPIC MOVIE
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5340811
1 GHOST RIDER
2 THE HOLIDAY
3 THE PROMISE
4 EPIC MOVIE

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 THE MESSENGER
2 GHOST RIDER
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 MUSIC AND LYRICS
5 FACES OF LOVE
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7 THE PROMISE
8 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE

VISAYAS
MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 BABEL
2 RESERVED
3 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
4 THE PROMISE
5 GHOST RIDER
6 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
7 RESERVED
8 THE MESSENGER

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 GHOST RIDER
2 FACES OF LOVE
3 THE PROMISE
4 THE HOLIDAY
5 THE CLEANER
6 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 GHOST RIDE
2 THE PROMISE
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 BABEL

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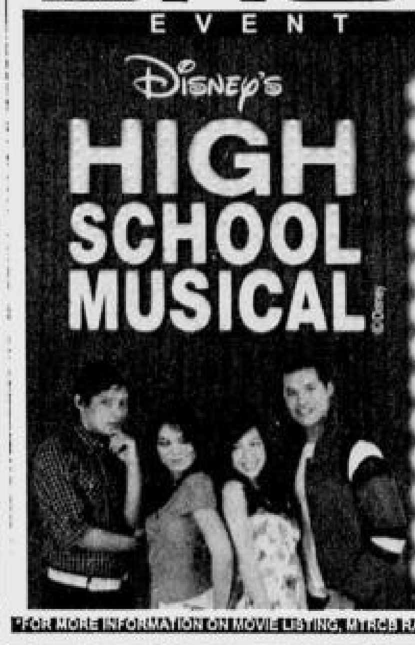

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2 GHOST RIDER
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
3 indieSine: IMAHE Nasyon
1.30 4:15 7:00 9.45
4 BRIDGE of TERABITHIA
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10.00
5 EPIC MOVIE
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
6 THE NUMBER 23
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
7 TROIKA
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
8 MUSIC and LYRICS
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
9 THE PROMISE 12:20 2:45
THE MESSENGERS 5:10 7:35 10:00
10 FACES of LOVE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

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2 THE MESSENGERS 12:10 1:50 2:30
MUSIC and LYRICS 5:10 7:40 10:00
3 BRIDGE of TERABITHIA
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
4 FACES of LOVE
12:20 2:15 4:10 6:05 8:00 10:00
5 EPIC MOVIE
12:35 2.50 5:05 7:30 10:00
6 GHOST RIDER
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
7 THE PROMISE
12 30 2:50 5:10 7:25 10:00

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1 THE NUMBER 23
11:30 1:55 4:20 6.45 9:10
2 GHOST RIDER
1:05 3:45 6:25 9:05
3 ROME and JULIET
12:30 3:10 6 00 9:00
4 THE PROMISE
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05
5 THE MESSENGERS
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
6 BRIDGE of TERABITHIA
11:30 1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10
7 EPIC MOVIE
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05
8 THE FOUNTAIN 12:30 2:25
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3 BRIDGE of TERABITHIA
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5 THE PROMISE

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2 GHOST RIDER
1:30 3:55 6:20 8:40
3 THE NUMBER 23
1:30 3.50 6:10 8:30
4 BRIDGE of TERABITHIA
12:05 2:10 4:15 6:20 8 25

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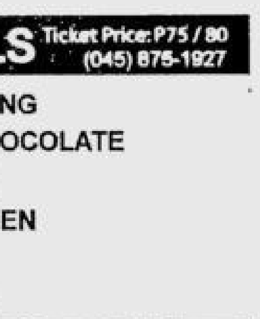


Best Picture could be sunny—again

"LITTLE Miss Sunshine" cast. Let not the photo mislead—this is actually a funny little film.

LOS ANGELES—THE ACADEMY AWARDS typically are a gloomy Sunday, ending with a heavy drama crowned as Best Picture.

Yet there is good news for this year's exhilarating romp, "Little Miss Sunshine": Over the last decade, academy voters have lightened up and handed the top trophy to the occasional comic frolic rather than a big, tragic pageant.

Granted, the Oscars went down with the ship on 1998 awards king "Titanic," died in the arena with Russell Crowe in 2000's champion "Gladiator," and reveled in wholesale carnage in 2003's victor "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King."

But they also caroused with the Bard in 1998's Best Picture recipient "Shakespeare in Love," wisecracked through stifling suburbia with Kevin Spacey in 1999's winner "American Beauty," and tapped their toes along with Renee Zellweger and Catherine Zeta-Jones in 2002's triumphant "Chicago."

Lighten up!

Do Oscar voters need to lighten up more often?

"Absolutely. This has been a sticking point for me as long as I've been a fan of movies," said critic Richard Roeper of the Chicago Sun-Times and TV's "Ebert and Roeper and the Movies." "People in the industry know better than anyone else that comedy is incredibly hard to do. Still, [they] don't want to reward a good action film or comedy."

In any case, the Oscars are looking cheerier than they have in decades. Here's the gloomy-vs-sunny scorecard for Best Picture winners over the last decade:

- **"The English Patient," 1996:** Gloomy. Ralph Fiennes' lover dies alone in a cave, and he gets most of his skin burned off before croaking in an act of assisted suicide.
- **"Titanic," 1997:** Gloomy. Everybody dies (except Kate Winslet and some insignificant others). On the sunny side, girls and women are hooked on heartthrob Leonardo DiCaprio to the tune of $1.8 billion worldwide.
- **"Shakespeare in Love," 1998:** Sunny. Gwyneth Paltrow wears a fake mustache to make good in a man's world and gets to sleep with the playwright (Joseph Fiennes). On the gloomy side, Shakespeare's a married man.
- **"American Beauty," 1999:** Partly sunny. Kevin Spacey goes from tubby to buff while mercilessly mocking everything in his life.

A homophobic military man puts a bullet in him, but Spacey lives on in eternity as a disembodied narrator.

- **"Gladiator," 2000:** Gloomy. Good soldier Russell Crowe is forced into gladiatorial slavery, and his wife and son are burned and hanged by Rome's wicked new ruler. On the sunny side, before dying, Crowe gets to butcher the sniveling emperor in front of a full house.
- **"A Beautiful Mind," 2001:** Gloomy. Good mathematician Russell Crowe loses his marbles and hangs out with sinister imaginary friends. On the sunny side, he wins a Nobel Prize.
- **"Chicago," 2002:** Sunny. Renee Zellweger and Catherine Zeta-Jones sing, dance, beat murder raps then take their act on the road.
- **"The Lord of the Rings:** The Return of the King," 2003: Gloomy. Probably the biggest body count ever in a Best Picture winner, even if most of them are digitally crafted fantasy creatures.
- **"Million Dollar Baby," 2004:** Gloomy. Spunky Hilary Swank overcomes the odds to become a star boxer, only to be paralyzed and have Clint Eastwood pitch in with another act of assisted suicide.
- **"Crash," 2005:** Gloomy. Seemingly everyone in Los Angeles interacts with everyone else over one tragedy-filled 36-hour stretch. On the sunny side, it's the funniest movie ever in which an off-duty policeman kills a hitchhiker, a vengeful store owner nearly shoots a little girl and a bigoted white cop terrorizes a black woman then rescues her from a car wreck.

This year's race is uncharacteristically wide open, with the winner anyone's guess among four heavy dramas—"Babel," "The Departed," "Letters From Iwo Jima" and "The Departed"—and the comic "Little Miss Sunshine."

Critic Roeper leans toward the somber "Babel," saying the film seems to have picked up momentum, while "Little Miss Sunshine" is simply this year's token comedy.

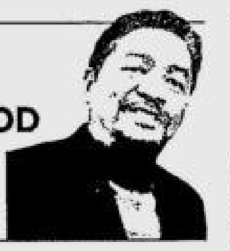
"The academy feels like they want to feel good when voting for Best Picture," Roeper said, "which means voting for something that's not going to make you feel good when you leave the theater." *AP*

> But one H'wood critic says 'Sunshine' is just this year's token comedy

MR. AND Mr. Smith are bound for the awards rites this weekend: Will, right, is a Best Actor nominee for "The Pursuit of Happyness." His precocious son Jaden, 8, is a presenter, one of the youngest in the history of the Academy.

Will Smith's pursuit of Oscar and 'happyness' with Jaden

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD



Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—HOW IS A NOMINEE's life like during the awards season, which culminates with the Oscars this Sunday?

Will Smith, who is in the running for Best Actor for his performance in the moving drama "The Pursuit of Happyness," described to us in an interview how it was like when he was nominated for the first time, thanks to "Ali."

He said, "That six-week period between the nomination and the awards show for 'Ali' was one of the most fun, roller coaster-like rides of my life. During that period, everybody's like a winner. Every night, you go out and see the same people. It's so much fun. Everybody in the world knows. But when you get to the actual awards show, it becomes a competition—something gets taken off. To be nominated is absolutely incredible. It's something that very few people will ever experience. But to make this movie with my son (Jaden Christopher Syre Smith), the experience we had making this movie—there's no award that could ever bring what that feeling was."

Jaden, 8, who is an Oscar presenter on Sunday (he has the honor of being one of the youngest presenters in the history of the Academy Awards), joined his dad halfway through this press con. The two are also father and son in "The Pursuit of Happyness," which is based on the inspiring true story of Chris Gardner, a struggling San Francisco salesman who finds himself and his son evicted from their apartment with nowhere to go. When Chris manages to get an internship at one of America's top brokerage firms, he and his son endure many hardships, including spending the night in a public restroom (one of the film's emotionally wrenching scenes which did happen in real life).

Watching and listening to the Smiths interact during the interview was a treat. Here's how it went:

Will (W): Oh, my man. Ladies and gentlemen, Jaden Christopher Syre Smith (applause as Jaden enters the room with his equally famous mom, Jada Pinkett Smith, who stays at the back and watches her two "boys"). Hey, what's up, man?

Jaden (J): Nothing.

W: You want your own chair or you're going to sit on my lap? You feel safe?

J: Here you go (he sits on his own chair).

W: (To Jaden) Good to see you. (To the members of the press) This is his first press conference.

Reporter (R): You are really wonderful in the movie.

J: Thank you.

R: You are just as good as your dad. But don't tell him that.

J: You, too.

R: Was it easy to work with your dad? Did he help you or did you help him?

J: I helped him (laughter).

R: In which scene did you have fun?

J: When I was sleeping…

W: Where? On the bus?

J: No, I was sleeping in my bed.

W: Oh, when you were sleeping on the bed at the beginning of the movie. That's all you remember because you were asleep for real (laughter).

R: What was it like for your son to see you on a professional level, outside being a dad?

W: (To Jaden) Was it different working with me than at home or did it feel the same? Was I different?

J: You were completely different.

W: Oh, what did I do?

J: You were acting (laughter).

Will Will (sorry, we couldn't resist that word play) bag the Oscar gold this second time around? Experts say he is a dark horse—the bets are on Forest Whitaker ("The Last King of Scotland"), who has swept the Best Actor races in all the earlier awards shows, including the Golden Globe, and veteran Peter O'Toole ("Venus"), a sentimental favorite.

Music and lyrics

After the interview, Will introduced Seal, who wrote the lyrics and composed the music (with Christopher Bruce) of the film's theme song, "A Father's Way." Seal, backed by two musicians, sang the ballad and played the guitar. Yes, this was a truly memorable afternoon at the Beverly Hilton.

The award-winning singer-composer stayed for a chat. The husband of model Heidi Klum, speaking in his native British accent, revealed how he creates those hits, including "Kiss for a Rose" and "Love's Divine": "I write whenever I feel inspired. I once read something about Paul Simon whom I respect a great deal. I read that he woke up at 9 every morning and between the hours of 10 a.m. and 12 noon, he wrote. I admire that but I can't do that. I'm probably the opposite. I write whenever I feel the urge to write something on paper."

The artist continued, "However, having said that, I don't really have that luxury anymore because I have a wife and kids. I can't be sitting at a restaurant with my kids and all of a sudden, go, 'Oh, I feel inspired. Bye-bye. I am going home to write (laughter).' I used to be able to do that but it doesn't work like that anymore because the kids don't really understand that you're inspired. They don't really care about any of that. They care about you being here, right now. So I have to be

WILL/ E5

RUSHES

79th Academy Awards quirky trivia

HOLLYWOOD—HERE ARE SOME QUIRKY facts about the 79th-annual Academy Awards on Sunday (Monday in Manila):

- In the acting categories, 10 individuals are first-time nominees. The other 10 share a total of 49 nominations over the years.
- Three are previous Oscar winners: Meryl Streep, Judi Dench and Cate Blanchett.
- Meryl Streep's nomination for "The Devil Wears Prada" is her 14th, extending her own record for acting nominations, set in 2002. Katharine Hepburn and Jack Nicholson are next, with 12 each.
- Britain's Kate Winslet is the youngest actress to receive five nominations at the age of 31. The previous record holder was Olivia de Havilland, who was 33 when she received her fifth nomination in 1949.
- Penelope Cruz and Rinko Kikuchi are both nominated for foreign-language roles. Four performers have won Oscars for spoken languages other than English: Sophia Loren ("Two Women"), Robert De Niro ("The Godfather Part II"), Roberto Benigni ("Life is Beautiful") and Benicio Del Toro ("Traffic").
- If Clint Eastwood's Japanese-language film "Letters from Iwo Jima" wins Best Picture, it would be the first foreign-language film to win in the category. The seven previous foreign-language Best Picture nominees are: "Grand Illusion," "Z," "The Emigrants," "Cries and Whispers," "The Postman," "Life is Beautiful" and "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon." *AFP*

REGINE VELASQUEZ

MERYL STREEP REUTERS

CATE BLANCHETT

KATE WINSLET

JACK NICHOLSON

Liotta nabbed

LOS ANGELES—"GoodFellas" actor Ray Liotta has been arrested in Los Angeles on suspicion of driving under the influence, police said on Sunday. Liotta, 52, was detained after his sport utility vehicle struck two parked cars near his home in the upscale coastal suburb of Pacific Palisades on Saturday evening, said Los Angeles Police Dept. spokesman Mike Lopez. (See exclusive interview on page E/5. *Reuters*

Zip, rip, vie

LOS ANGELES—Behind the scenes in Hollywood days before the Oscars, the sounds of zipping, ripping, sucking-in and sighing fill the air as film stars try out gowns before the red carpet parade. Although how they'll adorn themselves is a secret as closely guarded as the Oscar winners' names, the fashionistas are busily buzzing about who will wear what and whether it will turn out to be a "glamour do" or "glamour don't." *Reuters*

Rocky searched

CANBERRA—Sylvester Stallone's hotel room, private plane and limousine were searched, Australian media reported on Tuesday, just days after prohibited items were seized from his luggage at Sydney airport. The searches in Sydney, a few hours before he left the country, came as Australian Customs investigates prohibited items seized from the 60-year-old movie star's luggage when he flew into the city on Friday to promote his latest Rocky movie. *Reuters*

Hospital-bound

Regine Velasquez was set to undergo a medical procedure last week that would require her to stay in the hospital for a few days.

Velasquez earlier told the INQUIRER that she had taken a breakfrom doing a Valentine concert so she could watch other shows.

"But I have to go to hospital," she said, "and then rest for two more weeks. I can't sing, move about or wear high heels recuperation." *Nini Valera*

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Editor Emmie G. Velarde
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TAIL TALES

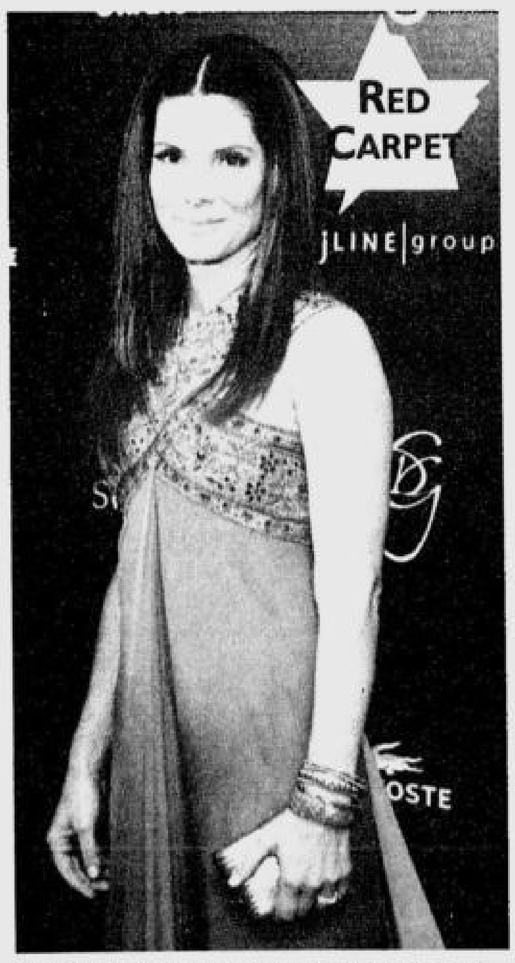
CHRISTINE BERSOLA-BABAO
WOULD YOU BELIEVE THAT [MY HUSBAND] JULIUS AND I BOTTLE-FEED MIMI, OUR LITTLE lamb? We also bottle-feed our goat named Basti. We shower them with tender loving care. We had a special "house" made for Basti and Mimi, along with our pot-bellied pig, Lucky. They give us a lot of joy. They teach our daughter Anya (Antonia Sofia Julia) to be caring and responsible. We feel safe when Anya runs around and plays with Mimi because [Mimi] doesn't bite and is so gentle. It's like we have a mini-farm. We bought Mimi from the Paradizoo Farm in Cavite. Bayani San Diego Jr.

FAVORITE NOOKS

PHOTO BY ROMY HOMILLADA

JENNYLYN MERCADO
MY BEDROOM, WITH ITS APPLE GREEN DRAPES, IS VERY RELAXING. I CAN ATTAIN PEACE OF MIND HERE. This is also where I practice playing my guitar and drums. When I'm home, I do nothing but sleep and eat. I used to have a mini-refrigerator, but I had it removed because I wanted to diet. Everything I need is in my room. The "photo-mosaic" portrait is a gift from a fan. The red dog stuffed toy is a Christmas gift from (fellow "Starstruck" winner) Mark Herras, while the white teddy bear is from (current boyfriend) Patrick Garcia. Bayani San Diego Jr.

RED CARPET



SANDRA Bullock arrives at the 9th Annual Costume Designers Guild Awards at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel IN Beverly Hills California last weekend. REUTERS

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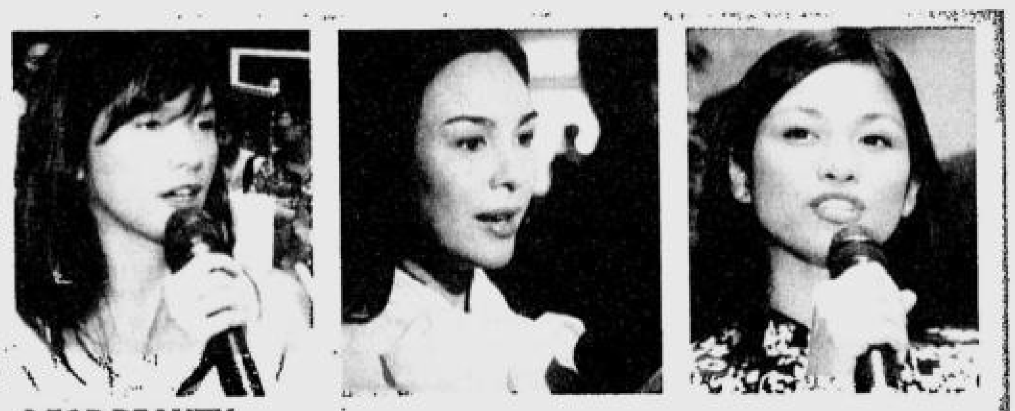

3 FOR BEAUTY
A NEW SKIN CARE PRODUCT POSED A CHALLENGE AND THESE THREE BEAUTIES took it up. (From Left) Agot Isidro, Gretchen Barretto and Miriam Quiambao turned up at SM Megamall recently to join the Olay Total Effects Swap—a single bottle in exchange for everything on one's dresser. Everybody knows that's quite a stretch in Gretchen's case, but she volunteered her true motivation: "When something's 'in,' I don't want to be left out."

"THE BEST SPY MOVIE EVER MADE" ...LARRY KING, CNN
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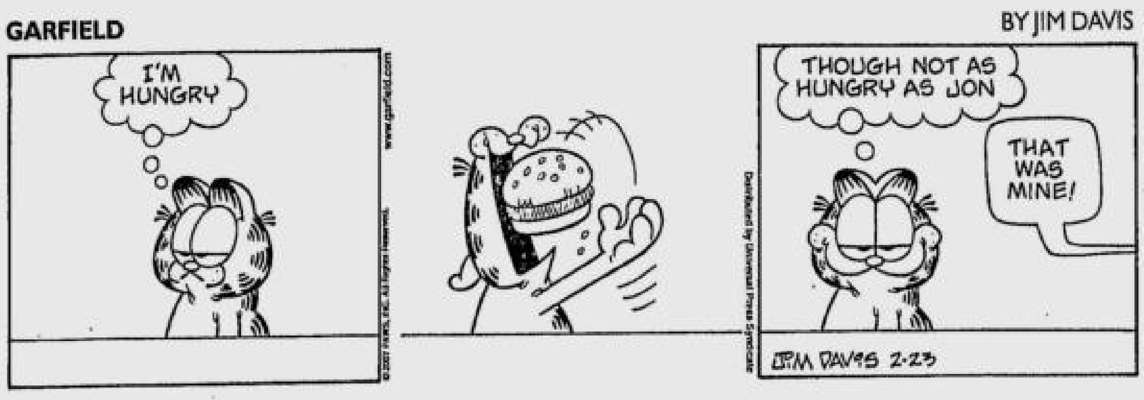
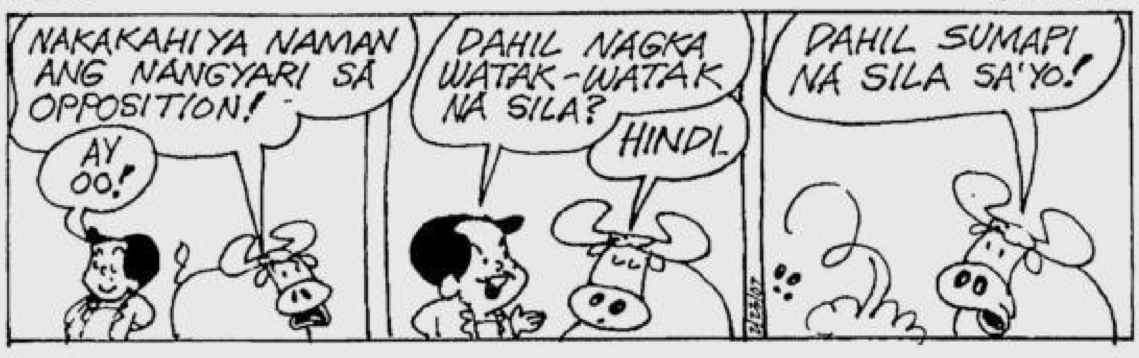
BY JIM DAVIS


I'M HUNGRY
THOUGH NOT AS HUNGRY AS JON
THAT WAS MINE!
JIM DAVIS 2-23

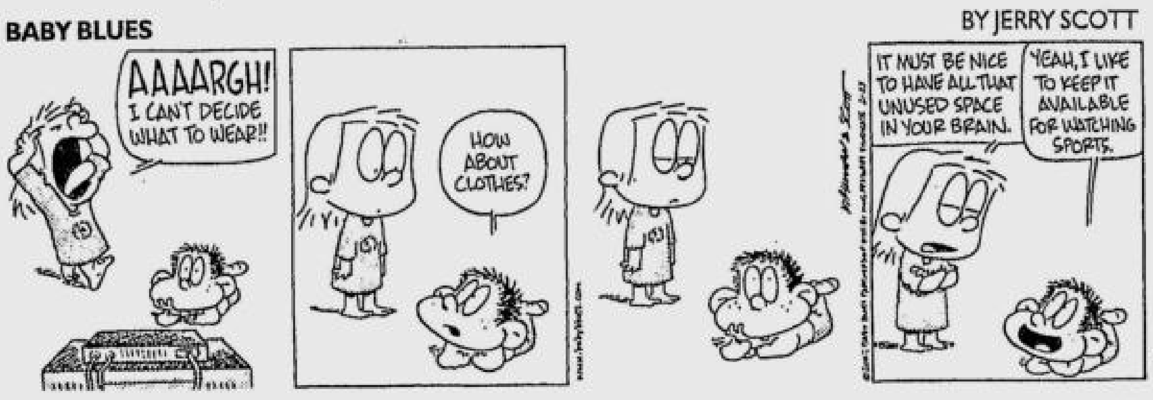
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NAKAKAHIYA NAMAN ANG NANGYARI SA OPPOSITION!
AY OO!
DAHIL NAGKA WATAK-WATAK NA SILA?
HINDI.
DAHIL SUMAPI NA SILA SA'YO!

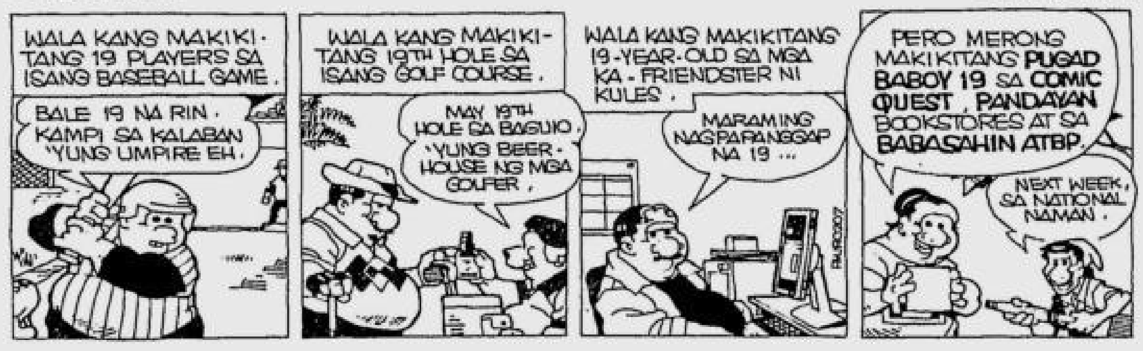
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


AAAARGH! I CAN'T DECIDE WHAT TO WEAR!!
HOW ABOUT CLOTHES?
IT MUST BE NICE TO HAVE ALL THAT UNUSED SPACE IN YOUR BRAIN.
YEAH, I LIKE TO KEEP IT AVAILABLE FOR WATCHING SPORTS.

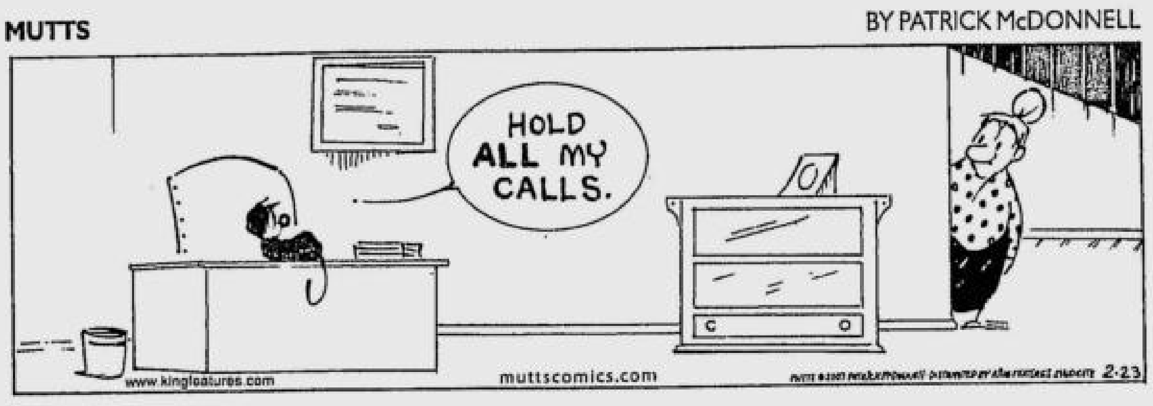
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


WALA KANG MAKIKITANG 19 PLAYERS SA ISANG BASEBALL GAME.
BALE 19 NA RIN. KAMPI SA KALABAN 'YUNG UMPIRE EH.
WALA KANG MAKIKITANG 19TH HOLE SA ISANG GOLF COURSE.
MAY 19TH HOLE SA BAGUIO. 'YUNG BEER-HOUSE NG MGA GOLFER.
WALA KANG MAKIKITANG 19-YEAR-OLD SA MGA KA-FRIENDSTER NI KULES.
MARAMING NAGPAPANGGAP NA 19...
PERO MERONG MAKIKITANG PUGAD BABOY 19 SA COMIC QUEST, PANDAYAN BOOKSTORES AT SA BABASAHIN ATBP.
NEXT WEEK, SA NATIONAL NAMAN.

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL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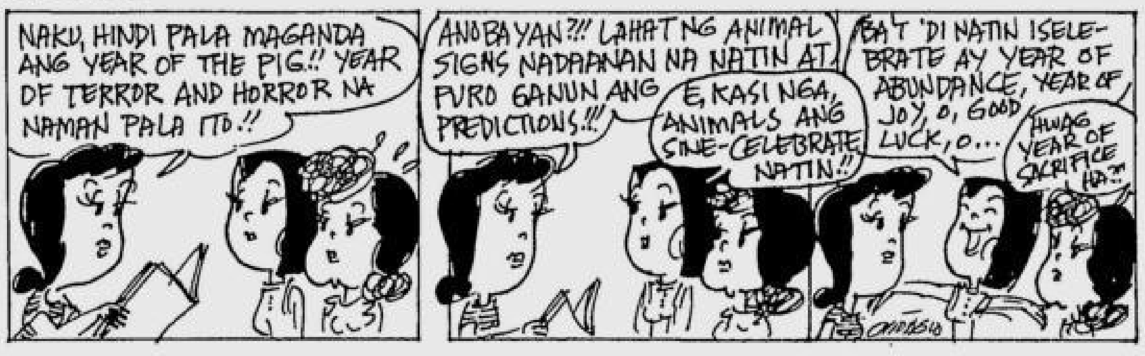
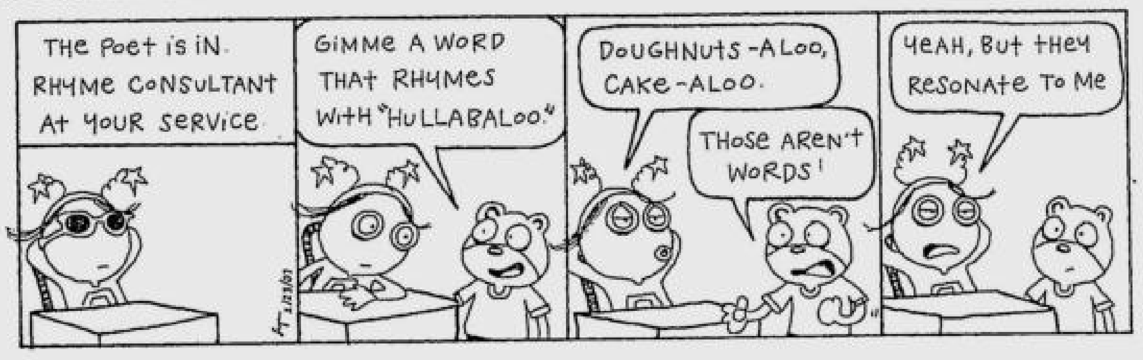
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NAKU, HINDI PALA MAGANDA ANG YEAR OF THE PIG!! YEAR OF TERROR AND HORROR NA NAMAN PALA ITO.!!
ANO BA YAN?!!! LAHAT NG ANIMAL SIGNS NADAANAN NA NATIN AT PURO GANUN ANG PREDICTIONS!!!
E, KASI NGA, ANIMALS ANG SINE-CELEBRATE NATIN!!
BA'T 'DI NATIN ISELEBRATE AY YEAR OF ABUNDANCE, YEAR OF JOY, O, GOOD LUCK, O...
HWAG YEAR OF SACRIFICE HA?!

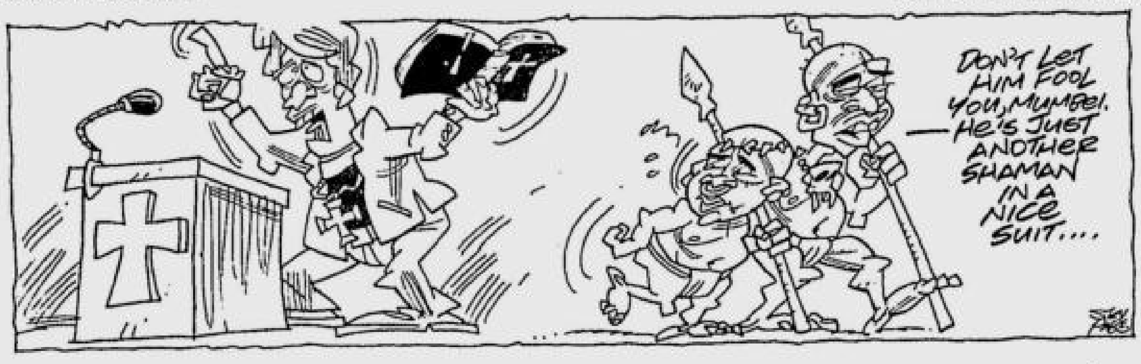
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


The Poet is IN. RHYME CONSULTANT At YOUR SERVICE
GIMME A WORD THAT RHYMES WitH "HULLABALOO."
DOUGHNUtS-ALOO, CAKE-ALOO.
THOSE AREN'T WORDS!
YEAH, But tHEY ResONAte To Me

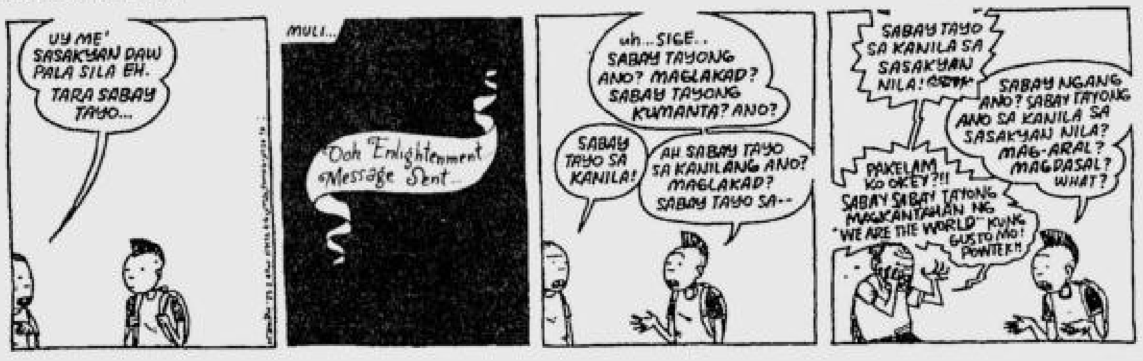
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DON'T LET HIM FOOL YOU, MUMBEI. HE'S JUST ANOTHER SHAMAN IN A NICE SUIT....

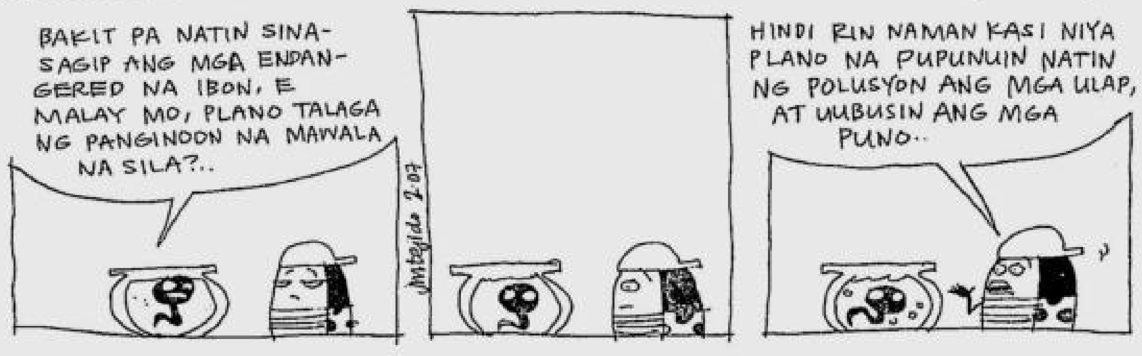
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY ME' SASAKYAN DAW PALA SILA EH. TARA SABAY TAYO...
MULI...
Ooh Enlightenment Message Sent...
uh...SIGE.. SABAY TAYONG ANO? MAGLAKAD? SABAY TAYONG KUMANTA? ANO?
SABAY TAYO SA KANILA!
AH SABAY TAYO SA KANILANG ANO? MAGLAKAD? SABAY TAYO SA--
SABAY TAYO SA KANILA SA SASAKYAN NILA! GRRR
SABAY NGANG ANO? SABAY TAYONG ANO SA KANILA SA SASAKYAN NILA? MAG-ARAL? MAGDASAL? WHAT?
PAKELAM KO OKEY?!! SABAY SABAY TAYONG MAGKANTAHAN NG "WE ARE THE WORLD" KUNG GUSTO MO! PONTEK!!

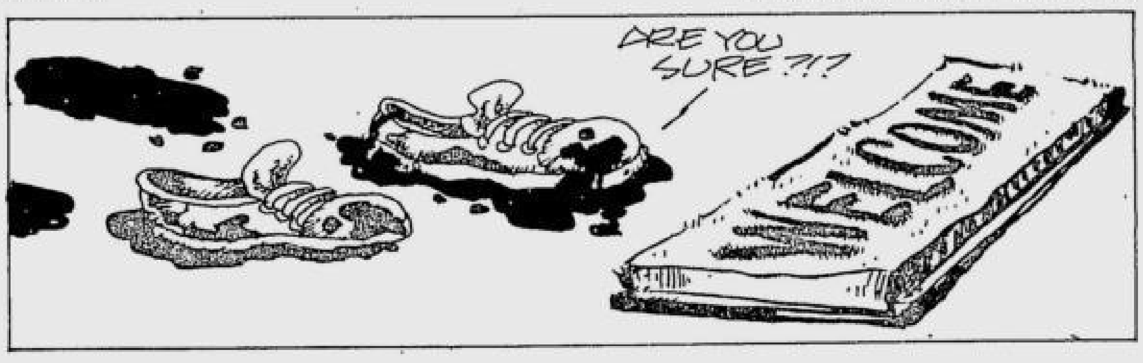
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BAKIT PA NATIN SINASAGIP ANG MGA ENDANGERED NA IBON, E MALAY MO, PLANO TALAGA NG PANGINOON NA MAWALA NA SILA?..
HINDI RIN NAMAN KASI NIYA PLANO NA PUPUNUIN NATIN NG POLUSYON ANG MGA ULAP, AT UUBUSIN ANG MGA PUNO..
JMTejido 2-07

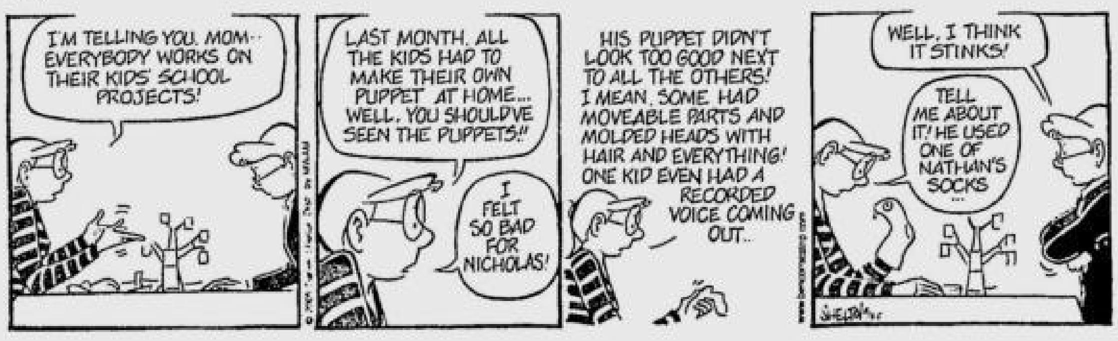
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

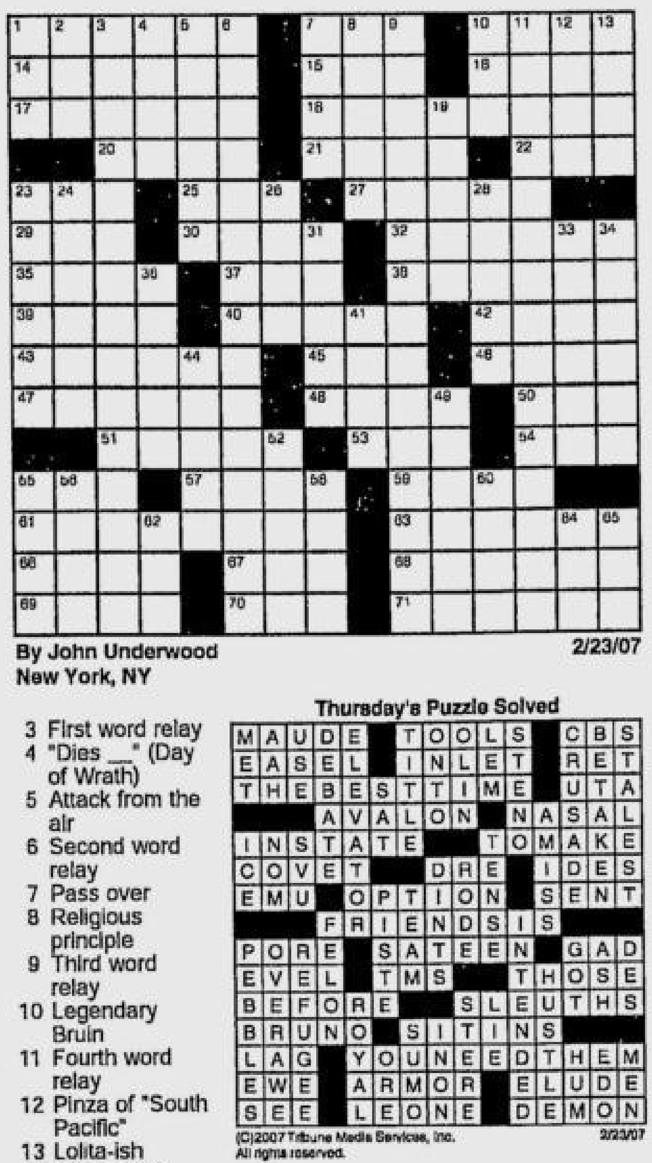

ARE YOU SURE?!?
WELCOME

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I'M TELLING YOU, MOM... EVERYBODY WORKS ON THEIR KIDS' SCHOOL PROJECTS!
LAST MONTH, ALL THE KIDS HAD TO MAKE THEIR OWN PUPPET AT HOME... WELL, YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN THE PUPPETS!
I FELT SO BAD FOR NICHOLAS!
HIS PUPPET DIDN'T LOOK TOO GOOD NEXT TO ALL THE OTHERS! I MEAN, SOME HAD MOVEABLE PARTS AND MOLDED HEADS WITH HAIR AND EVERYTHING! ONE KID EVEN HAD A RECORDED VOICE COMING OUT...
WELL, I THINK IT STINKS!
TELL ME ABOUT IT! HE USED ONE OF NATHAN'S SOCKS...
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By John Underwood
New York, NY

2/23/07

ACROSS
1 Braque's art
7 The Racer's Edge
10 Raw minerals
14 Military city of old
15 Cyclades island
16 Demolish
17 Norse heaven
18 Mingle
20 Smile radiantly
21 M. Le Pew
22 Mr. Rogers
23 Vane dir.
25 Dined
27 To the point
29 Earmark
30 Idyllic garden
32 Dorothy's fellow traveler
35 Jessica of "Dark Angel"
37 __ culpa
38 Guy of "Factory Girl"
39 Beach bucket
40 Basra native
42 Mine sites
43 Fell behind
45 Album track
46 Sooty matter
47 Preserve a corpse
48 Hollow tube
50 "Norma __"
51 "Miami Vice" co-star
53 Lobster catcher
54 Past one's prime
55 High School subj.
57 Ms. St. Vincent Millay
59 Those other guys
61 __ pinscher
63 Guard duty
66 Bolt holder
67 Luau strings
68 Dis-compose?
69 Pinto rival of the '70s
70 Morning drops
71 Abounded

DOWN
1 Dixie letters
2 FedEx rival
3 First word relay
4 "Dies __" (Day of Wrath)
5 Attack from the air
6 Second word relay
7 Pass over
8 Religious principle
9 Third word relay
10 Legendary Bruin
11 Fourth word relay
12 Pinza of "South Pacific"
13 Lolita-ish
19 Nightmarish
23 Paper binder
24 "Peace" salutation
26 Stag, for example
28 Loses one's cool
31 Equality group est. in 1909
33 Based on fact
34 Settled in
36 Like pond scum
41 Tidbit of wit
44 Mr. Fudd
49 Fuel ingredient
52 Plumber's helper
55 1999 Ron Howard film
56 Nary a one
58 From scratch
60 Diminutive suffix
62 Zeta follower
64 Hydrogen's number
65 Digital display letters

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

M	A	U	D	E	■	T	O	O	L	S	■	C	B	S
E	A	S	E	L	■	I	N	L	E	T	■	R	E	T
T	H	E	B	E	S	T	T	I	M	E	■	U	T	A
■	■	■	A	V	A	L	O	N	■	N	A	S	A	L
I	N	S	T	A	T	E	■	■	T	O	M	A	K	E
C	O	V	E	T	■	■	D	R	E	■	I	D	E	S
E	M	U	■	O	P	T	I	O	N	■	S	E	N	T
■	■	■	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	I	S	■	■	■
P	O	R	E	■	S	A	T	E	E	N	■	G	A	D
E	V	E	L	■	T	M	S	■	■	T	H	O	S	E
B	E	F	O	R	E	■	■	S	L	E	U	T	H	S
B	R	U	N	O	■	S	I	T	I	N	S	■	■	■
L	A	G	■	Y	O	U	N	E	E	D	T	H	E	M
E	W	E	■	A	R	M	O	R	■	E	L	U	D	E
S	E	E	■	L	E	O	N	E	■	D	E	M	O	N

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2/23/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have an analytical mind, which makes you a great problem-solver. Nevertheless, you're practical and pragmatic. If you want something, you're very convincing. In large measure, this is because you believe in yourself. However, you also know when to hold and when to fold. (Your sense of timing is uncanny.) Give yourself the time this year to study or learn something important.

Birthdate of: Peter Fonda, actor; Kristin Davis, actress; Majel Barrett, actress/producer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Be on the lookout for opportunities to travel or further your education, because these are the areas where you will expand in 2007. (Water what wants to grow.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a fortunate year for you, because gifts, goodies and help from others will come your way. Some of you will receive an inheritance. Others will get money back from the government.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Partnerships and close friendships are beautifully blessed this year. Make the most of this. Enjoy good times with others.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): It's important to be constantly on the lookout for ways to improve your job, because that's exactly what you can do this year. Expect a better job, better duties or a promotion.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your sign is looking at one of the most fun-loving, social, romantic years you've had in decades! In fact, some of you will meet the love of your life.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Be on the lookout this year for real estate deals or ways to improve where you live. Similarly, you'll find family relations much more joyful and enriched.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Short trips, study, reading and writing will give you joy and lots of valuable information this year. It's a good time for you simply because you're happier.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): It will put a smile on your face to know that you're going to make more money this year. Naturally, if you make more money, you're going to be spending more as well. Ka-ching!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This might be one of the best years of your life. Your ruler, lucky Jupiter, is back in your sign, bringing opportunities and powerful people your way. Just snap your fingers!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your sympathy for those who are less fortunate increases, and this tender frame of mind makes you a better person. True happiness stems from helping others.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Just accept the fact that your popularity rating is increasing this year. Join clubs and organizations. Make time for your friends.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your career and your public reputation have never looked better. You're really going to put yourself on the map this year. People will be impressed.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	6						3	
4			2		1			5
		2		5		1		
	2						4	
		3		9		2		
	1						9	
		9		2		8		
1			3		6			7
	3						6	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

2/23

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	6	4	2	8	9	1	7	5
8	5	1	6	4	7	3	2	9
2	9	7	5	1	3	8	4	6
4	2	8	1	9	5	7	6	3
6	7	9	8	3	2	4	5	1
5	1	3	4	7	6	2	9	8
7	4	6	3	5	8	9	1	2
9	8	5	7	2	1	6	3	4
1	3	2	9	6	4	5	8	7

Difficulty Level ★★★

2/22

BUDDY ZABALA of 'The Dawn'

BOOKS

A FAVORITE OF mine is "Ang Mundo ni Andong Agimat," a local comic book by artist-writer Arnold Arre, who's a good friend. I couldn't put it down once I started reading it. This book comes on the heels of another Arre comic book, "The Mythology Class." I'm also a big fan of the comic-book novels by Neil Gaiman, and "Watchmen" by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons. I recommend these books because of the great writing and engaging characters. I'm now on Book 2 of "The Bartimaeus Trilogy" by Jonathan Stroud. I'm also eagerly awaiting the final "Harry Potter" novel. Also a fixture on my bookshelf are Malcolm Gladwell's "Tipping Point" and "Blink."

Bayani San Diego Jr.

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10:45, 12:40, 3:05
5:30, 7:55, 10:25
R-13

CINEMA 2 MUSIC AND LYRICS
11:45, 2:25, 5:00
7:35, 10:10 PG-13

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11:45, 2:05, 4:20
6:35, 9:00 GP

CINEMA 4 EPIC MOVIE
10:40, 12:55, 3:10
5:25, 7:40, 10:00
R-13

CINEMA 5 GHOST RIDER
10:45, 1:40, 4:30
7:20, 10:10
PG-13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

March 00, 2007	EDNA LEDESMA " DANCING W/ THE CHAMPIONS "	8:00 PM
March 16 & 23, 2007	SITTI ... IN LOVE	8:30 PM
March 30, 2007	[illegible]	8:00 PM

TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00 PM
March 9, 2007	DAVE	8:30 PM
March 10, 2007	JOHN LESACA	8:00 PM
March 15, 22, 29, 2007	RAYMUND LAUCHENGCO	8:30 PM

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20 directors. 1 film.

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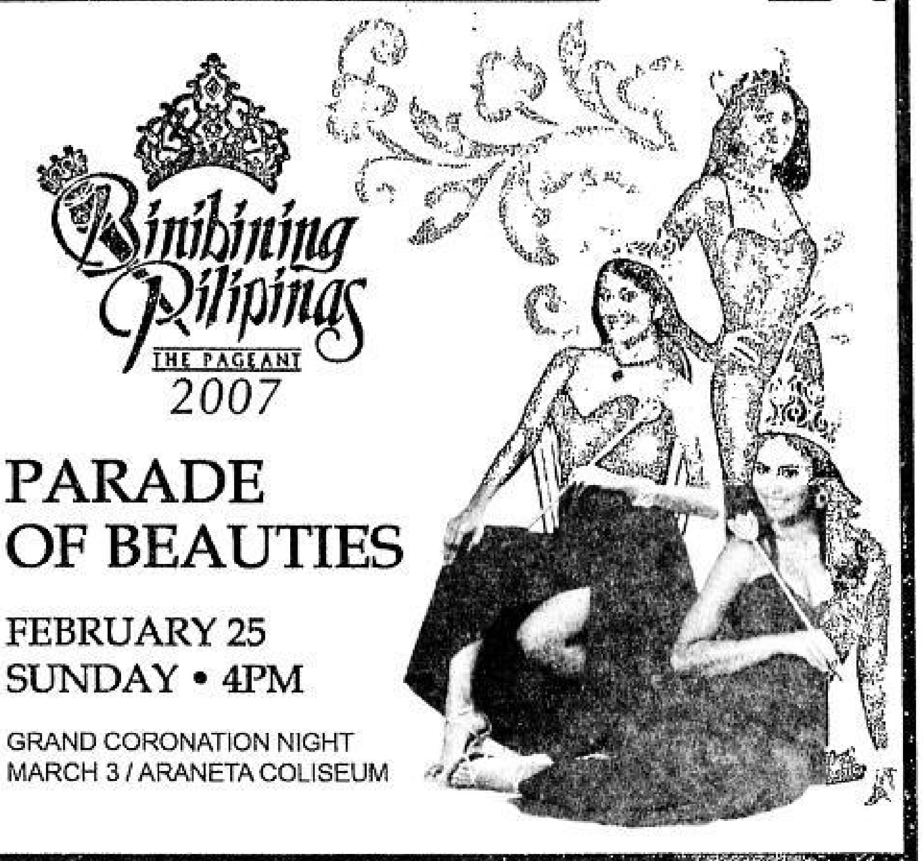
Gateway Ali MALL Farmers Plaza



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EPIC MOVIE 30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:40	NUMBER 23 11:50 / 2:15 / 4:40 / 7:05 / 9:30	BRIDGE OF TERABITHIA 12:30 / 2:45 / 5:00 / 7:15 / 9:30	
ASK THE DUST 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00	THE PROMISE 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40	GHOST RIDER 12:10 / 2:35 / 5:00 / 7:25 / 9:50	
THE MESSENGERS 12:10 / 4:55 / 9:40	MUSIC & LYRICS 1:05 / 3:15 / 5:25 / 7:35 / 9:45	THE HOLIDAY 2:05 / 6:50	GHOST RIDER

Ali MALL 5

EPIC MOVIE 12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30	GHOST RIDER 1:20 / 3:45 / 6:10 / 8:35	NUMBER 23 1:05 / 3:30 / 5:55 / 8:20
THE PROMISE 12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30	BRIDGE OF TERABITHIA 12:05 R4 / 1:20 / 3:35 / 5:50 / 8:05	DOLBY DIGITAL DTS SDDS

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS
Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777.
THX

G1	GLORIETTA 1	1 NUMBER 23	2 GHOST RIDER	3 BRIDGE OF TERABITHIA	4 THE PROMISE
G4	GLORIETTA 4	1 NUMBER 23	2 MUSIC & LYRICS	3 THX GHOST RIDER GUARANTEED SEATS	
		4 FACES OF LOVE	5 BRIDGE OF TERABITHIA	6 EPIC MOVIE	7 THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND
GB1	GREENBELT 1	1 EPIC MOVIE	2 NUMBER 23		
GB3	GREENBELT 3	1 THX EPIC MOVIE GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX NUMBER 23 GUARANTEED SEATS		
		3 THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND GUARANTEED SEATS	4 MUSIC & LYRICS GUARANTEED SEATS	5 GHOST RIDER GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX NUMBER 23 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 BRIDGE OF TERABITHIA		
		3 EPIC MOVIE	4 MUSIC & LYRICS	5 GHOST RIDER	
ACC	AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 GHOST RIDER	2 MUSIC & LYRICS	3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER	4 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE
M2	MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE PROMISE	2 BRIDGE OF TERABITHIA		
		3 EPIC MOVIE	4 GHOST RIDER	5 NUMBER 23	

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272, from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853, from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782, from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Looney Tunes presents Light, Camera... Showtime! February 23 to 25, 2007	Slimmer's World Healthy Habit 2007 Mall Tour Febryary 24, 2007
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Microsoft Vista Launching February 16, 2007	Philippine Grapplers' League 2007: The Resurrection! Febryuary 24, 2007

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FOX SEARCHLIGHT glorietta GREENBELT

Looney Tunes presents...
Lights, Camera... SHOWTIME!

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Glorietta
Glorietta Activity Center
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11am, 3pm & 6pm

Market! Market!
Activity Center
March 9-11, 2007
3pm & 6pm

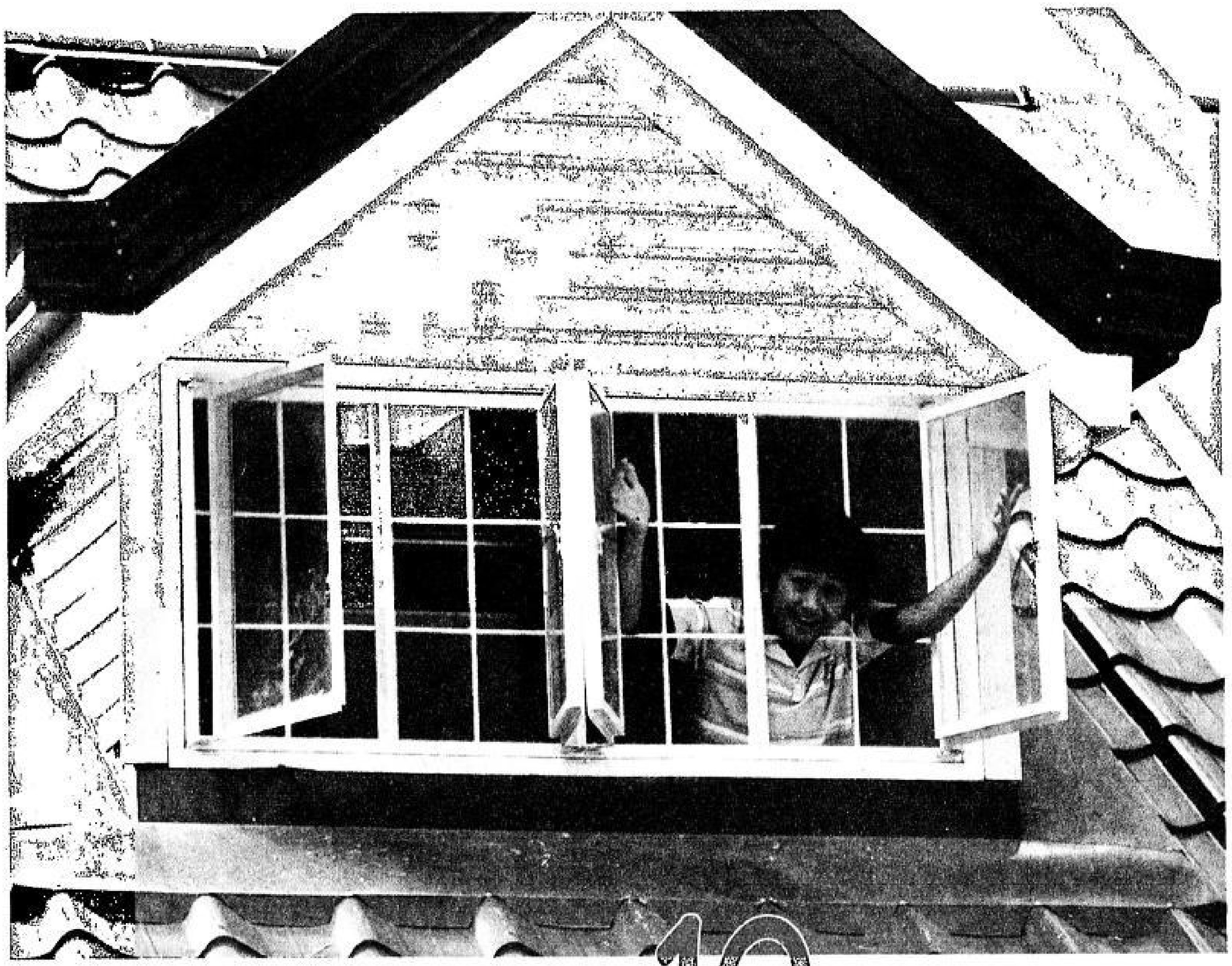
Alabang Town Center
Activity Center
March 2-4, 2007
11am, 3pm & 6pm

Ayala Center Cebu
Activity Center
March 16-18, 2007
11am, 3pm & 6pm

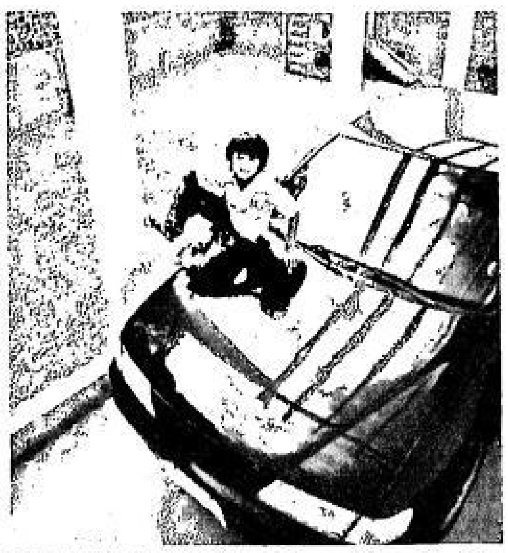
Ayala Malls
LOONEY TUNES glorietta ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET!

HOME BODY

The Kapamilya network has given Makisig Morales, 'Little Big Superstar' host, a house and lot



FLYING high: "Super Inggo" waves from the second-floor window.



THE FAMILY car, a Nissan Sentra, bought with Makisig's "Little Big Star" prize money.

PLAYGROUND set is from the old house.

Homeowner at 10

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Romy Homillada

MAKISIG MORALES COULD VERY WELL BE the nation's youngest homeowner at 10.

ABS-CBN, with the help of Delfin Lee of Globe Asiatique, has given Makisig and family a spiffy new home in San Mateo, Rizal, just minutes away from their old house—a one-room 25-sq. m. flat on an 84-sq. m. property.

"*Siksikan kami noon,*" dad Jong remembers.

The new two-story home stands on a 120 sq. m. lot and boasts three rooms and plenty of space for Makisig and his six siblings—Rick Vincent, 13; Mayumi, 11; Magiting, 8; Maaya 7; Maliksi, 4; and Marikit, 1 ½—to run around in.

"I set up the old playground set in our new garden," Jong says.

Although Makisig now has his own bedroom, he prefers to crash in his siblings' room. "It's more fun *daw* to stay in the same room with his brothers and sisters," explains Jong.

Dad turned the spare room into a study for the kids. "I put in five study tables there."

Charlene Gonzales' "At Home Ka Dito" recently gave the house a makeover.

"We displayed Makisig's 'Super Inggo' action figures in the living room," Jong says. "Our new living room is bigger than our old house. I'm so thankful for these blessings."

Makisig, who has just wrapped up the *fantaserye* "Super Inggo" and is now co-hosting the kiddie talent search "Little Big Superstar," juggles schooling and show biz with ease, says his dad. He's now in Grade 4 at La Culetta Academy.

"We bring my books to tapings," Makisig relates.

Jong chaperones Makisig on the set and assists him in his school work. "I don't want him to neglect his studies. I really focus on him, especially now that he has lots of new projects lined up." Among these assignments are a movie with Sharon Cuneta from Star Cinema and a CD from Star Records.

Makisig's earnings are "in the bank," says Jong.

They've also invested in a car, a 1997 Nissan Sentra, which they bought with Makisig's prize money from the old talent show "Little Big Star," where he was a runner-up.

Needless to say, Jong and Makisig's mom Jacqueline are proud of the young man's achievements.

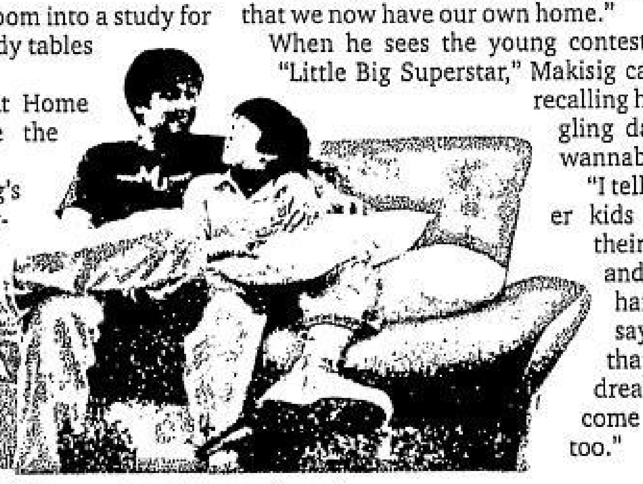
Makisig himself is ecstatic. "I'm very happy that we now have our own home."

When he sees the young contestants on "Little Big Superstar," Makisig can't help recalling his struggling days as a wannabe.

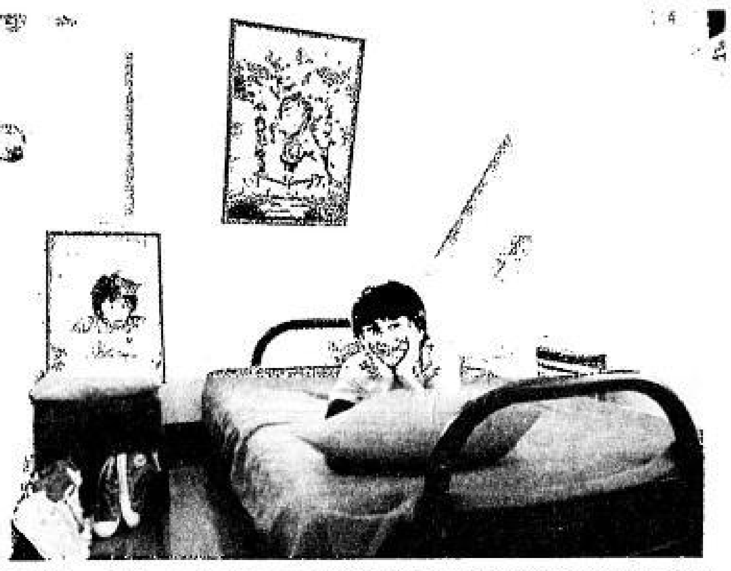
"I tell the other kids to give their best and work hard," he says, "so that their dreams will come true, too."

MOVING up ... the new home's stairs.

FRAMED family pictures are displayed in the living room.



DAD Jong acts as tutor on the set.



HE HAS a spiffy new bedroom, but Makisig would rather crash in his siblings' room.

YOUNG star poses by the kiddie tables in the dining room.

Snapshots from the 57th Berlinale

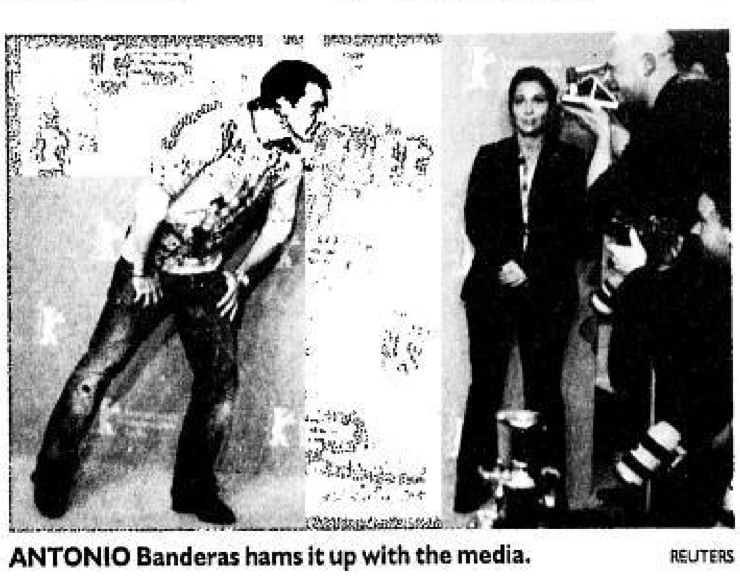
RED CARPET

JENNIFER Lopez and Marc Anthony REUTERS

SOPHIA MYLES AFP

DIANE KRUGER AFP

NAN YU and Qua-An Wang AFP



ANTONIO Banderas hams it up with the media. REUTERS

MAYA ZAPATA AFP

FAN BING-BING AFP

LUCY RUSSELL REUTERS

ROAD TALK

US blind group finds hybrid cars 'too quiet'

WASHINGTON-- AN ASsociation of blind Americans warned recently that cars with hybrid engines using electricity and fuel are dangerously too quiet for pedestrians.

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) said hybrid cars pose a risk to the blind, children, the elderly, cyclists and distracted pedestrians.

The group said it conducted tests with blind people.

"We had the car drive by in different situations, to see whether or not people could hear it and use the sound of the car to safely cross the street, and they could not. The car was just silent," NFB spokesman John Pare told AFP.

Pare said NFB does not want to add to noise pollution, but hybrid cars should not be less noisy than other cars.

Chris Danielsen, a 36-year-old NFB member, said up to 30 people took part in tests on a side street and in an alleyway with two hybrid cars of different makes.

"We all stood on the side of the street and the idea was to raise your hand as you heard the car approach," Danielsen said.

"We generally couldn't sense that it was there right in front of us," he said.

Barbara Pries, a member of NFB's pedestrian security committee, said no blind person has been killed by a hybrid car but some have reported having near accidents.

NFB said it contacted Toyota, Honda and Ford in vain to ask that a noise or signal could be added to their hybrids.

Toyota representatives said there were no current plans to change its hybrid but that it was looking into improving pedestrian safety.

"We are aware of this issue and studying a way to improve pedestrian safety. It's important that the solution doesn't add to noise pollution but is good for pedestrians," said Toyota spokeswoman Martha Voss.

AFP

New Volvo V70: First-class ride

AS A LEADER IN THE WAGON segment with 54 years of continuous refinement, Volvo will introduce the all-new Volvo V70 at the Geneva Motor Show in March. The all-new Volvo V70 sets the standard for premium wagons.

"This segment has been our specialty ever since we invented it back in the 1950s," said Volvo Cars president and CEO Fredrik Arp. "Our competitors can count on us remaining number one in the future, too. In the all-new V70, rear passengers and luggage both ride in first class."

In Europe, the wagon segment is growing as more and more sedan owners come to appreciate the added versatility wagons offer. But while the overall concept of a wagon hasn't changed, the buyer has. Today's wagon intender will not compromise on design, comfort or driving dynamics.

"The attitude towards the modern wagon has undergone a significant change. With greater focus on design and comfort, the all-new V70 is both luxurious and practical. It's not just for families with growing children but also for active people that demand everything of their cars. In fact, we expect that half of all V70 buyers won't actually be families with children," Arp said.

New architecture

By using completely new vehicle architecture, Volvo's designers and engineers have gained a number of advantages over the current V70: For the first time a six-cylinder engine will be offered beneath the sculpted hood of the Volvo V70 —an efficient 3.2-liter inline-6 making 235 horsepower; space in the rear seat has increased; combined with the new booster cushions and the strong body side structure, the all-new V70 provides children of varying sizes with effective protection in a side impact; driving comfort has been considerably enhanced, with superb seats and ergonomically designed instruments.

Stunning design

The front of the all-new V70 incorporates a unique soft nose with a black eggcrate grille featuring chrome in the vertical bars. This gives the all-new V70 a distinctive, athletic stance when viewed from the front. The climbing waistline also contributes to the forward-leaning, dynamic posture which is further reinforced with the help of the black pillars between the side windows.

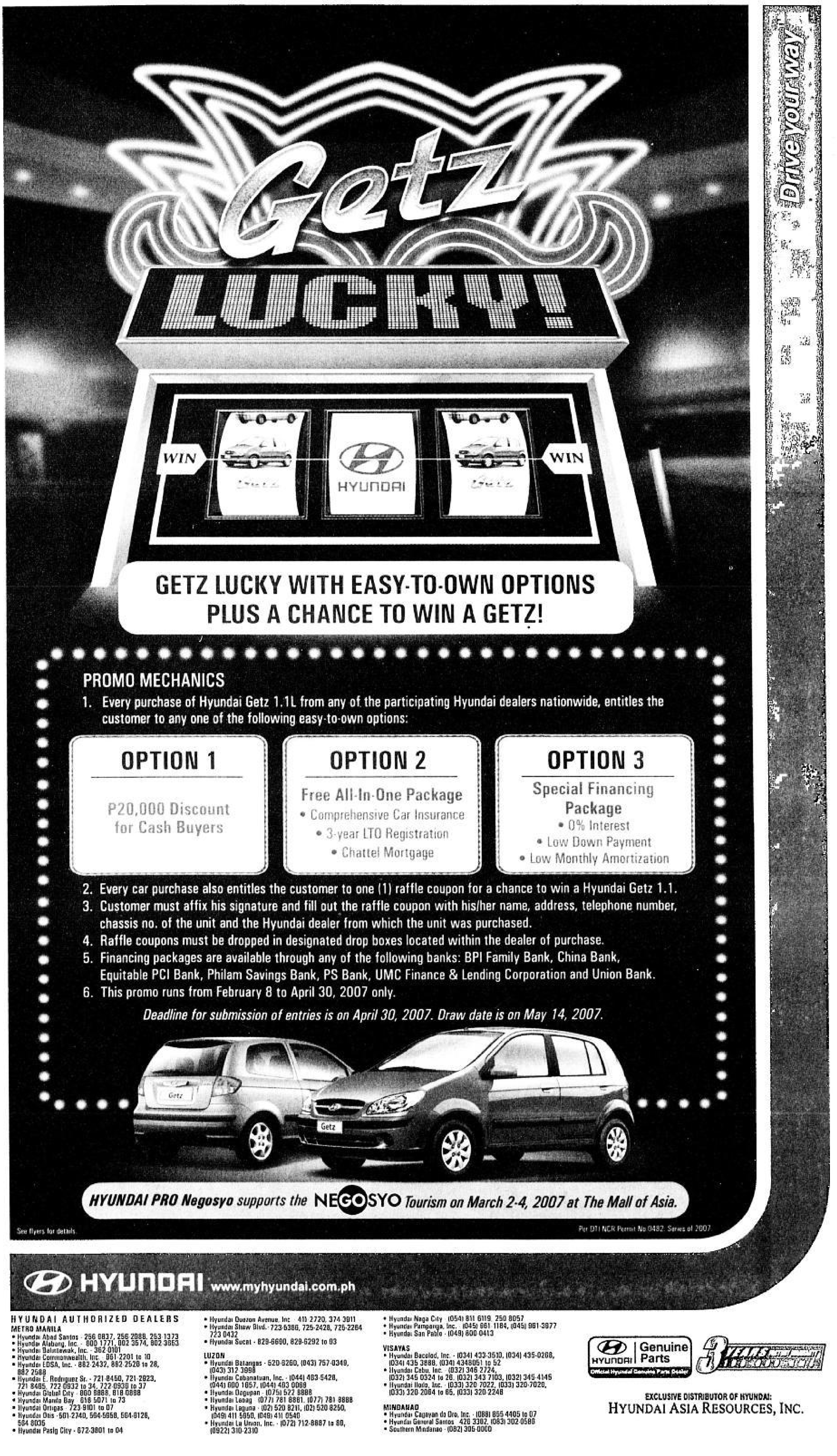
The rear of the all-new V70 features artfully sculpted lines that are more dynamic than the current car.

Hari off to good start in 2007

DESPITE A DOWNHILL TREND IN THE local automotive industry, Hyundai continues to climb the market ladder, posting a 12.1-percent increase in sales for the first month of the year as compared with the same period last year.

Based from the YTD Industry Sales Performance announced by the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc (Campi), Hyundai Asia Resources Inc (Hari), exclusive distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the country, posted a sale of 557 units for January 2007, 12.1 percent higher than the 497 units posted in January 2006. This increased Hyundai's market share to 7.4 percent, and brought it to the no. 4 spot in the overall ranking of the local automotive industry.

In spite of the mounting problems afflicting the automotive industry, Hari remains optimistic. It garnered a 20-percent increase in sales from 2006 to 2007 and is more than likely to sustain the momentum in 2007.



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PROMO MECHANICS

1. Every purchase of Hyundai Getz 1.1L from any of the participating Hyundai dealers nationwide, entitles the customer to any one of the following easy-to-own options:

OPTION 1
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OPTION 2
Free All-In-One Package
- Comprehensive Car Insurance
- 3-year LTO Registration
- Chattel Mortgage

OPTION 3
Special Financing Package
- 0% Interest
- Low Down Payment
- Low Monthly Amortization

2. Every car purchase also entitles the customer to one (1) raffle coupon for a chance to win a Hyundai Getz 1.1.
3. Customer must affix his signature and fill out the raffle coupon with his/her name, address, telephone number, chassis no. of the unit and the Hyundai dealer from which the unit was purchased.
4. Raffle coupons must be dropped in designated drop boxes located within the dealer of purchase.
5. Financing packages are available through any of the following banks: BPI Family Bank, China Bank, Equitable PCI Bank, Philam Savings Bank, PS Bank, UMC Finance & Lending Corporation and Union Bank.
6. This promo runs from February 8 to April 30, 2007 only.

Deadline for submission of entries is on April 30, 2007. Draw date is on May 14, 2007.

HYUNDAI PRO Negosyo supports the NEGOSYO Tourism on March 2-4, 2007 at The Mall of Asia.

See flyers for details.

Per DTI NCR Permit No 0482, Series of 2007

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HYUNDAI AUTHORIZED DEALERS

METRO MANILA
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- Hyundai Alabang, Inc. - 800 1771, 802 3574, 802 3663
- Hyundai Balintawak, Inc. - 362 0101
- Hyundai Commonwealth, Inc. - 961 2201 to 10
- Hyundai EDSA, Inc. - 882 2432, 882 2520 to 28, 882 2588
- Hyundai E. Rodriguez Sr. - 721 8450, 721 2823, 721 8485, 722 0932 to 34, 722 0930 to 37
- Hyundai Global City - 800 8888, 818 0888
- Hyundai Manila Bay - 818 5071 to 73
- Hyundai Ortigas - 723 9101 to 07
- Hyundai Otis - 501 2740, 564 5868, 564 0126, 564 8036
- Hyundai Pasig City - 672 3801 to 04
- Hyundai Quezon Avenue, Inc. - 411 2720, 374 3011
- Hyundai Shaw Blvd. - 723 6386, 725 2428, 725 2264, 723 0432
- Hyundai Sucat - 829 6600, 829 6292 to 03

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What 'road hogs' are 'hoinking' about

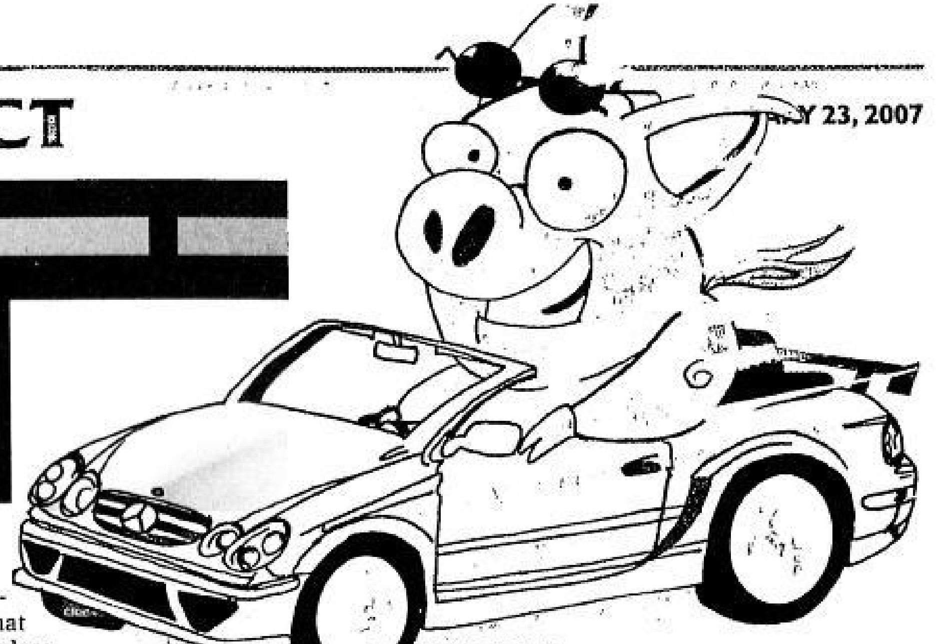


ILLUSTRATION BY ALIZZA BUTIONG

PARDON THE PUN-LOADED headline, folks, but the year of the pig has just dawned upon us, and what better way to welcome the stately swine than to present it with a buffet of cool rides and hot, hot car accessories. When you see the following on Philippine roads, you know 2007 won't be a "boar", after all.

Leno's choice

A car is a reflection of your personality. This might be what jay Leno has in mind whenever he drives around town in one of his cool collectibles. Known as a man who is passionate about his cars, Leno's "Big Dawg" garage is a haven, or better yet, a paradise of anything on four wheels. His collection is revered by enthusiasts worldwide. With roughly around 500 cars in his garage, what is Leno's secret in keeping his collection shining like new? The answer is Adam's Premium Car Care. What started out as a backyard industry several decades ago has evolved into being the preferred choice of American auto detailers, car collectors, car clubs and Hollywood celebrities. It is America's oldest and most trusted brand in car care and is the ultimate choice when it comes to auto detailing.

Adam's experience and extensive research and development have enabled it to provide the efficiency of achieving the deepest and richest shine possible. The scientifically mixed polish and waxes are easy to apply and remove; and is guaranteed not to leave a chalky white mark on your cars' plastic and rubber trims. Each Adam's product is carefully formulated with special blends of high quality polymers, acrylics and waxes.

"The most important thing is that Adam's can out-gloss any brand being sold in the market today. Our products just don't clean your car, Adam's helps maintain its luster and shine against the natural elements," says Manolet Santos of Ansan International Ventures Inc, the official distributor of Adam's car care products in the Philippines.

Adam's Premium Car Care signature line includes dressings, cleaners, sealants and polishes that are all guaranteed to outlast and outshine any product that you have used down the years. For information on how to take care of that investment, Adam's Car Care is available in all Do-It-Yourself (DIY) shops or call 894-2920 for details or e-mail Adam's at ansan@pldtdsl.net for further information.

Motul's supercar: Automotive icon

The Motul-Autech Skyline GT-R is the most iconic Japanese sports coupe in the Nissan Skyline range. Dubbed the "Godzilla" by "Wheels" magazine of Australia, the Skyline GT-R earned its reputation and iconic status because it provided performance and handling equal, if not exceeding, the overall performance of European thoroughbreds like the Porsche 911 and the Ferrari Testarossa when it was released in 1989. Even the Skyline's home market competitors like the Honda NSX, Toyota Supra, Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution, Subaru Impreza and the Mazda RX-7 found it difficult to compete alongside the mighty Skyline GT-R.

When Nismo introduced the R32 Group A Skyline in 1989, the R32 GT-R was equipped with a 2350cc straight six, turbo charged engine, with a rated 600 bhp using a RWD drivetrain. Since then, the Skyline GT-R has been the weapon of choice of race teams due to its handling, reliability and tuning capabilities. GT-R Skylines of the 1990s progressed from the R32 through the R34 in 1999. Released in 1999 with a production life up to 2002, the Skyline GT-R R34 had an N1 engine and speedometer reading of up to 300 kph. Nissan produced 45 R34 N1's from the factory, while 12 units were handed over to Nismo for the Super Taikyu racing. The rest were sold to lucky customers, mostly racing teams and tuning firms.

With the Skyline GT-R competing professionally, the car would eventually make motorsports history and rack up titles like the Mount Panorama championships in 1991-1992; 1993 Spanish Touring Car Championship; Pikes Peak Hill Climb in 1993 with Akira Kameyama at the wheel; Rhys Millen in an R33 GT-R took the win at Pikes Peak in 1998, and some podium finishes at the Le Man's 24-Hour grand prix, Super Taikyu, All-Japan GT Fuji 500 and recently at the Japan Super GT series. These days, the Skyline GT-R remains as the popular car of choice for import drag racing, time attack and drift competitions worldwide.

With the Skyline GT-R being a part of our automotive culture, Autoplus Sportzentrium, one of the country's top tuning firms and the exclusive distributors of Motul Oil and Lubricants, will let Filipinos feel and experience the icon first hand by bringing in the No.22 Motul Pitwork Skyline GT-R.

"This is Motul's way of giving something back to the market. This car is the real deal, it is the actual car used by M. Kageyama and R. Lyons in the Super GT and Fuji GT 500," states Adrian Baltazar, marketing head of Motul Oils division-Autoplus. The Motul Pitwork GT-R is to be displayed at the Manila International Auto Show in March with a month-long mall tour all over Metro Manila. Get the chance to see the icon in the flesh and the chance to grab some Motul Pitwork merchandise and accessories.

Give it horns!

Wheel Gallery, the exclusive distributor of Nitto tires and Concept One, Twenty Inches Strong (TiS) tuner wheels, is set to innovate the local market once again with its latest line of large size rims for SUVs and luxury sedans. Guaranteed to take your vehicle's looks up a notch are the trendy designs from Petrol and Black Rhino. "Petrol and Black Rhino are the rising stars in the aftermarket industry in both the US and European scene. With their cutting edge design and strong market demand for performance-oriented wheels, we feel the time is right to expand our product line even further," states Sammy Liuson of Wheel Gallery.

Black Rhino wheels are designed with the truck and SUV enthusiast in mind. The rugged styling draws its inspiration from one of the toughest beasts in the world, the Black Rhino. Most wheels are finished with Black Rhino's thick skin chrome, and offer a painted option on many styles, including gloss black with a brilliant machined lip and silver with a full machined face. Black Rhino wheels are engineered to carry the heavy loads often associated with Trucks and Sport Utility Vehicles. All wheels are either hub centric or supplied with centering rings to ensure a smooth vibration-free ride. Black Rhino wheels come in the following wheel sizes: 20x8.5, 20x9, 22x9, 24x9.5. So when it comes to choosing a well-built, tough-looking wheel for your truck or sport utility vehicle, go on and give it horns.

Known as the authority in the domestic aftermarket industry, Wheel Gallery's line of wheels fit most Japanese, European and American SUVs, AUVs, sub-compact cars and passenger cars. Concept One, TiS, Petrol and Black Rhino wheels are 100 percent CNC machine quality, tested, and has been certified by the Japan Wheel License (JWL-T), Vehicle Inspection Association (VIA), Specialty Equipment Manufacturer's Association (Sema), ISO9000, QS9000 and TUV.

For inquiries on how to improve your automotive personality and

ROAD HOGS/ G3

A NISSAN Armada equipped with Black Rhino wheels.

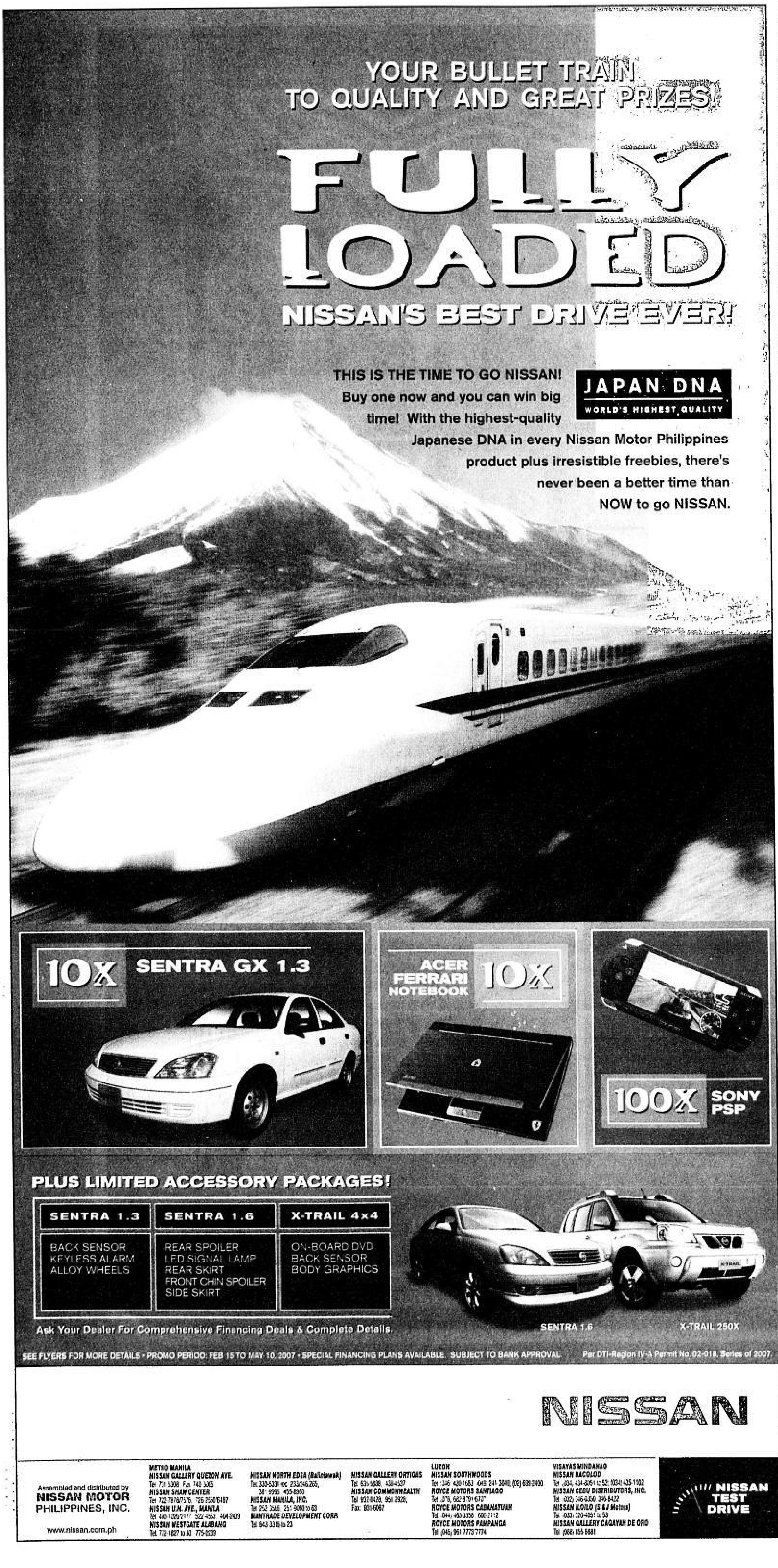
Nissan 'Fully Loaded!'

AS A GRAND WELCOME TO 2007, Nissan Motor Philippines Inc (NMPI) roars out with the "Fully Loaded" promo. Starting Feb. 15, valued customers have a chance to win one of 10 Nissan Sentras to be given away along with a whole host of exciting prizes.

"It's our way to start the year with gratitude and cheers to those who have supported NMPI products," explains Dennis Chang, AVP for sales and marketing division.

The Nissan "Fully Loaded" is just a taste of what NMPI has in store for 2007. Expect a whole lot more excitement to come your way. NMPI offers the Nissan "Fully Loaded Deals" from Feb. 15 to May 10 giving away 10 Sentra 1.3GX sedans, 20 Acer Ferrari Laptops and 100 Sony Play Station Portable. All customers who purchase any NMPI vehicle during the promo period are entitled to join the raffle. Raffle coupons will be issued based on the vehicle purchased.

Now is an even greater time to own the Nissan you've always wanted. Aside from the Nissan "Fully Loaded Deals", customers can also take advantage of these exciting free upgrades. For the Nissan Sentra 1.3L, avail of the back sonar, keyless entry and alloy wheels. For the Nissan Sentra 1.6L, avail of the sporty body kits and LED signal lamp. And for the mighty X-Trail 4x4 variant, avail of the back sonar, body graphics and DVD, perfect for the summer road trip getaway. Plus, customers can also avail of attractive financing deals from their favorite Nissan dealership. Expect a whole lot of surprises and events, for this is NMPI's way of saying "Thank you" to its loyal customers. Visit your nearest Nissan dealer and prepare to be blown away!



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SENTRA 1.3	SENTRA 1.6	X-TRAIL 4x4
BACK SENSOR KEYLESS ALARM ALLOY WHEELS	REAR SPOILER LED SIGNAL LAMP REAR SKIRT FRONT CHIN SPOILER SIDE SKIRT	ON-BOARD DVD BACK SENSOR BODY GRAPHICS

SENTRA 1.6
X-TRAIL 250X

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What 'road hogs' are 'hoinking' about

From page G2

image, visit Wheel Gallery at 318 Santolan Road corner M. Paterno, San Juan or call 724-2739 or 726-0965, or log on to www.conceptonewheels.com. Black Rhino Wheels are also available in select Concept One dealers nationwide.

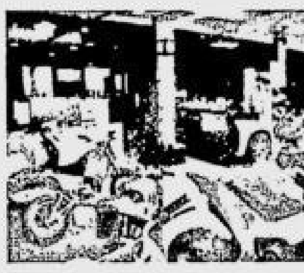
Let there be Xenon light!

Xenon bulbs, the country's innovator of automotive lighting systems recently, opened the doors of its new showroom to better serve the needs of its client base. Designed by renowned architect Daniel Go, the Xenon showroom is a blend of art deco and industrial design cues. Inside the showroom is an array of high-intensity discharge bulbs (HiD), OEM Spec headlight and tail light clusters for European sedans and select Japanese sub compact cars which are neatly placed in a specially designed display rack.

The launch also coincided with the introduction of new products to be distributed by Xenon such as Sebring high performance exhaust from Germany and an expanded product line of Smart Bikes. A service bay is located adjacent to the showroom which is manned by personnel trained to meet the service requirements and installation of Xenon Bulbs. Special tools are also on hand for the upkeep and after-sales service of Smart Bikes. "I feel that it is time to give something back to our loyal customers. With this showroom, clients can enjoy the airconditioned confines and watch their favorite movie or read a magazine in our lounge. Our product rack gives you an idea of what Xenon is right for your car or they can choose an electric bike displayed in the showroom," states Benedict Go of Hummer Philippines, exclusive distributor of Xenon Bulbs.

Safe nighttime driving

Xenon Bulbs technology adapts to varying conditions such as weather, road, and vehicle speed. Aside from automotive headlamp systems, other applications of xenon bulbs technology include: marine (for fast crafts and ships), stage production, industrial and military use. Unlike other imitation HiDs in the local market, Xenon Bulbs carry an after-sales warranty of up to 12 months. When purchasing a set of Xenon Bulbs, look for the seal of quality and the Xenon Bulbs logo. All authentic Xenon products made by HPI carry a warranty seal inside the box. "There are lot of lighting products currently being sold in the market, and being passed off as Xenon Bulbs. These imitation bulbs are cheaper, they wear out easily and carry no warranty. Our packaging alone reflects the quality of our products," adds Go.



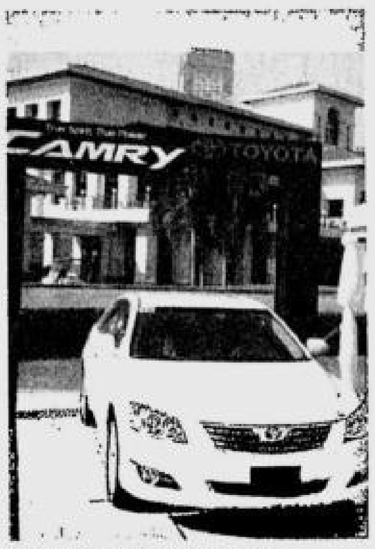
Xenon bulbs have evolved from being a mere safety accessory to becoming a standard safety option for both car owners and automobile manufacturers. Xenon Bulbs have also expanded its financial services by way of cashless convenience. "We now accept HSBC and Citibank credit card payments with zero interest," states Go.

For inquiries, call 713-1998 or visit the Xenon showroom at 318 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, or log on to www.xenonbulbs.com.

ROCKWELL LAND SUPPORTS CAR OF THE YEAR

Rockwell Land Corp signed a memorandum of agreement with the Car Awards Group Inc (Cagi) to hold the Car of the Year awards night on March 8 at the Rockwell Tent at the Plaza in Makati City. This year marks the third year of Rockwell's partnership with Cagi. Rockwell Land president Nestor J. Padilla (left) signs the agreement with Cagi president Aida Sevilla Mendoza and Cagi vice president Alvin Uy.

Toyota holds 1st Camry Invitational Cup



THE HOLE-in-one prize: Camry 3.5Q

TOYOTA MOTOR PHILIPPINES Corp held the First Camry Invitation Cup Feb. 16 at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City. The golf tournament was participated in by 119 players from Toyota's valued business partners comprised of its individual and corporate clients, friends from the media, and their dealership network. Guests of honor were none other than Secretary Leandro Mendoza of the Department of Transportation and Communication, National Treasurer Omar Cruz, and Chair Thompson Lantion of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB).

Hiroshi Ito, TMP president, expressed during his welcome remarks, "The primary objective of this event is to build stronger relationships among our valued business partners… This golf tournament also aims to strengthen our primary luxury sedan brand, the Camry. Since the introduction of the latest generation Camry in September last year, it has strongly dominated the medium size passenger car segment with over 58 percent market share. We are confident this beautiful product will continue to make Toyota proud over the next few years."

Aside from the five special prizes for the fun holes, Toyota also awarded the top three players from each of the tournament's three major categories-dealer, media, and customers. Toyota recognized the second runner-up, first runner-up, and champion from each of the three categories. From the dealer division, Rolando Malig and lawyer Reginaldo Oben of Toyota Otis were the 2nd and 1st runners-up respectively; while Don Juan Miguel Oben reigned champion. Toyota's media friends likewise excelled in the game with Philippine Daily Inquirer's Jong Arcano landing as the 2nd runner-up; and Top Gear Magazine's JJ Dinglasan and Joey Anciano awarded as the 1st runner-up and champion respectively.

Participants from the customer category also provided impressive scores. Toyota recognized the top three winners, beginning with Omar Cruz as 2nd runner-up, Zuellig's Rafel Cruz as the first runner-up, and Darly De Roca of Lydia's Lechon as the champion.

With the success of the event, Toyota hopes to hold the Camry Invitational Cup annually.

FROM left: Thompson Lantion, LTFRB Chair, Arturo Macapagal, president, Toyota Pasong Tamo, Leandro Mendoza, DOTC Secretary, and Hiroshi Ito, president, TMP.

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Diesel engines: Emission and power issues

Road Talk contributor and roving mechanic Giby Yalung answers your most pressing auto concerns

Q: How do I get more power from a diesel-powered Hi-Ace Grandia 3.0 van?

A: The best way is to turbocharge. Turbocharging is used by most modern diesel engines as well as most high-performance gasoline powered cars to achieve more power by adding pressurized air into your engine and enhancing its capacity by another 1300cc of "extra breaths". Turbocharging involves an exhaust-driven turbine connected by a common shaft coupled to an air blower spinning at around 100,000 RPM. These devices, however, don't come cheap. But when they are properly matched and installed, a turbocharger system easily pumps up an average of 20 to 50 percent more power out of a typical engine without adversely affecting the fuel economy and reliability of the engine.

If turbocharging is out of your budget, the cheaper way to get more speed is to strip the body weight by 10 percent or more. But then again, you'd have to wrack your brains out choosing what goes out of your van.

Q: I recently bought a used '97 Turbo Intercooler Pajero and observed that the car was spewing oil from the exhaust pipe while belching white smoke. After overhauling the engine, calibrating the fuel injection pump, and spending almost P100,000, the problem persisted. Now all I can do is pressure wash the tail pipes every morning to lessen the smoke emission. What could be the real problem?

A: You probably have a broken oil shaft seal in the vehicle's turbocharger system. Just like an engine's water pump that spins endlessly, the turbocharger is also prone to wear and tear, especially in the area lubricating the high-speed spinning bearings.

Once these bearings wear out, the oil leaks through the shaft. The leaking oil is then sucked into the intake manifold. The wet oil passes through the intake and exhaust valves as it cannot be burned off by the cylinders. The end result is white smoke and oil residue coming out of the exhaust pipe.

My advice is for you to replace the turbocharger right away. A repair kit might work, but it's not a sure fix in giving your turbo a long, trouble-free life.

For more car concerns, e-mail giby at giby72@yahoo.com.

Cool off your car on a budget

USING PLAIN WATER IN CAR COOLING systems has been a common practice with drivers, especially among those who feel they are on a tight budget and think they can do without radiator coolants and additives. However, did you know that this habit is virtually money going down the drain? The fact is that the long-term effects of using plain water in your car radiator may most likely be costlier than regular maintenance using coolant.

This is because tap water contains ions, which form crystal-like residue within the radiator and can cause corrosion. The radiator becomes clogged, rendering the entire cooling system inefficient. Coolant is important to prevent such corrosion and rust, and to protect the cooling system's metal components from further damage or deterioration. You are therefore protected from engine overheat or boilover. Rain or shine, your car's cooling system is in tip-top condition.

Prestone Coolant Ready-To-Use is the answer to car owners' budget woes. It is a high-quality yet affordable, convenient and easy to use cooling system additive that will not burn your pocket. It is excellent in overheat and corrosion protection. Prestone Coolant Ready-To-Use is highly compatible with the rubber and metal parts of your car's cooling system. Clogging and corrosion will definitely be kept at bay. For less than a hundred pesos per bottle, enjoy year-round protection from radiator corrosion, compared to the thousands of pesos you might need to shell out for a complete radiator overhaul when corrosion damage reaches an irreparable point.

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ANTI-RUST

Chevrolet Optra Wagon: 1.8-M km road test reveals real performance

THE CHEVROLET OPTRA WAGON IS A compact car that boasts features of both a sedan and a station wagon and is built at GM Thailand's world-class manufacturing plant in Rayong. It exudes handsome exteriors, spacious interiors and features a simple yet classy designed dashboard, and a tilt-adjusting steering column that allows for driving convenience and comfort.

The Optra Wagon offers more space and has features like the roof rail apparatus. Inside, metallic instrument panel trim replaces the sedan's black trim, framing a state-of-the-art 5-in-dash CD player. Equipped with speed-sensitive steering, power assist, and steering wheel mounted stereo control, the Optra Wagon also provides undisturbed driving with sound-absorbent foam, a special noise suppression system and a hydraulic engine mount that absorbs shock and reduces noise when starting, accelerating and braking.

The Optra Wagon has the roomiest interior in its class, including a 60-40 split-folding rear seatback for both people and cargo-moving functionality. It is also the first car in its class equipped with a compact cool box conveniently located in a front compartment.

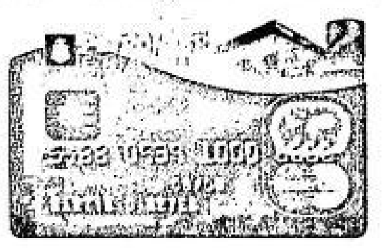
The Optra Wagon is equipped with a 1.6-liter E-Tec II 4-Cylinder DOHC 16-valve engine that generates 110 hp, delivering increased performance and lower fuel consumption. The Chevrolet Optra Wagon has been put through 1.8 million km of durability tests to ensure its performance under real driving conditions

The Optra Wagon has been engineered to provide the quietest possible ride, and features the unique Euro-Ride Tuning Suspension shock-absorbing system, which is specially designed to accommodate load distribution for any road condition. Its 15-inch alloy wheels enhance the Optra Wagon's grip on the road.

The Optra Wagon has received the top safety rating from the American Insurance Association, having been tested in over 190 crash tests to ensure the safest crumple zone. Its safety is ensured through a driver-side air bag, ABS and 4-wheel disc brakes with EBD (Electronic Brake Distribution) system as well as a survival zone.

The 1.6 Chevrolet Optra Wagon is priced at an affordable P816,000 and P856,000 for the 5-speed manual transmission and 4-speed automatic LS models, respectively, and the SS variants are priced at P863,000 (manual) and P963,000 (automatic). The result is a fine combination of value for money, luxury and practicality that complement the active lifestyles of today's fun-loving and exciting generation.

Petron-BPI Mastercard: Better value, extra miles



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